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THE HISTORY OF CHARLES WENTWORTH, Esq.

IN A

SERIES OF LETTERS.

INTERSPERSED

With a Variety of IMPORTANT REFLECTIONS,

CALCULATED

To improve MORALITY, and promote the ŒCONOMY OF HUMAN LIFE.

VOL. III.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

THE HISTORY OF CHARLES WENTWORTH, ESQ.

LETTER I.

To Miſs STANHOPE.

DEAR SOPHIA,

I Herewith incloſe you the copy of a letter from Mr. Wentworth, that is is juſt come to hand, and requires no comment from,

Dear Sophia,

Your, &c.

Monday afternoon.

LOUISA CONWAY.

To HENRY CONWAY, Eſq.

Incloſed with the preceding.

DEAR SIR,

MY uncle, whoſe illneſs lately diverted my journey from town, expired yeſterday morning, to the great grief not only of all his relations, but acquaintance alſo; to whom he was juſtly endeared by his amiable qualities and irreproachable character.—By this event the family eſtate (amounting to about ſix hundred pounds per ann.) devolves to myſelf. His perſonal effects, money, &c. are given to my brother, and amount to about ten thouſand pounds.—As I am conſtituted executor to his will, you can eaſily conceive the different avocations which at preſent demand my attention; and I need not tell you that the care of his interment, and the regulation of his affairs, will neceſſarily employ me for

ſome days.—By you I muſt convey my reſpectful ſentiments to Mrs. and Miſs Conway; and permit me to add, that as this melancholy event has removed my late embarraſſment, as ſoon as the circumſtances of my ſituation will reconcile my abſence with the laws of propriety, I ſhall ſet out for London, and ſollicit in marriage the moſt amiable of women, with the honour of being conſidered as,

Dear Sir,

Your moſt grateful

and affectionate brother,

EDWARD WENTWORTH.

LETTER II.

To Miſs STANHOPE.

DEAR SOPHIA,

LATE laſt evening Mr. Wentworth arrived in town, and early this morning made us a viſit. — After the uſual ſalutations, he politely intimated that as the obſtacles that had before oppoſed his happineſs were now removed, he hoped the former partiality and intentions of the family in his favour had ſuffered no change, and that he might aſk "the bleſſing of your friends hand in marriage, and eſcape the miſery of a refuſal." As the ſentiments of every one were expreſſed in a manner very favourable to his deſires, he intreated me to fix the day of marriage, and add to his happineſs by making it as ſhort as poſſible;

in

in this requeſt he was joined by my mother, brother, and Mrs. Conway. I appointed three weeks from to-morrow.—It was diſliked as too remote; and the united importunity of all preſent, prevailed with me at laſt to fix it a week earlier.—Thus, my dear Sophia, you ſee me entering on the confines of a ſtate, that to me is new and untried.——Your preſence will be neceſſary to ſupport me in the ſolemnity of an indiſſoluble union. I muſt therefore intreat the favour of your return to town before the important day arrives, even though it ſhould be ſooner than you had before intended.—It is not without pleaſure that I reflect I am going to aſſume a beloved name, that I cannot hear pronounced without rapture.—My imagination, filled with pleaſing ideas, ſuggeſts extravagant hopes of felicity in an union ſo perfect.—I ſhall write to you again in a few days; but at preſent

can only assure you, that I shall invariably continue in every state,

Dear Sophia,

Your most faithful

Tuesday.

and affectionate friend,

LOUISA CONWAY.

LETTER

LETTER III.

To Miſs Conway.

DEAR LOUISA,

FOR ſome days paſt I have promiſed myſelf the pleaſure of attending you at the ceremony of your tranſition to a ſtate which I hope will prove to you a ſtate of permanent happineſs; and this promiſe I lately repeated in a letter to you, with my congratulations on the happy circumſtances of your ſituation. But the ſudden indiſpoſition of Mrs. Stanhope will, I fear, prevent my returning to town ſo ſoon as Tueſday. Her illneſs does not indeed appear dangerous, but I cannot flatter myſelf with the hope of her perfect recovery ſo ſoon; and great as my inclination to be with you is, I cannot think of leaving the beſt of parents in ſickneſs.—You are going, my dear Louiſa, to form an engagement that muſt relax the gentle

ties of friendſhip; and by entering on an untried ſtate, expoſe yourſelf to hazards that are inſeparable from the moſt unexceptionable union: every appearance is at preſent in your favour, and will authorize the ſtrongeſt preſumption that it will prove to you a ſource of felicity.—Your heart, that was once mine, muſt now receive other affections, to which friendſhip muſt give place. I ſhall, however, be content with ſuch a ſhare of it as conjugal affection will permit.—You know my wiſhes for your happineſs too well to render it neceſſary for me to repeat them here, or any aſſurances of that unalterable affection with which I am,

Dear Louiſa,

SOPHIA STANHOPE.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

To Miſs STANHOPE.

DEAR SOPHIA,

I AM for a minute retired to my apartment, to inform you that the awful ceremony that has indiſſolubly joined me to the moſt deſerving of men, is now paſt.—I have ſuſtained the ſolemnity of this irrevocable engagement with more fortitude than my timid apprehenſions would ſuffer me to hope.—The tranſaction to me was ſolemn and affecting; and though ſupported by the moſt ardent affection for the man to whom I am united, it has, notwithſtanding, impreſſed my mind with a ſerious awe, from which I am yet unable to recover. How much more trying muſt the occaſion have been, had it united me to a man either indifferent or diſagreeable, to whom duty, or the influence of parental authority, might have induced

me to ſacrifice my future tranquillity.—I am not permitted at preſent, my dear Sophia, to enter on a minute narration of the circumſtances of this tranſaction, which I hope I ſhall ever be able to remember with pleaſure: Mr. Wentworth's behaviour was decent, polite, and manly. —— For myſelf, the novelty of my ſituation, and the importance of its change, produce a contrariety, a confuſion of hopes and fears that agitate the mind; and by rendering it uncertain where to fix its expectations, produce ſenſations ſo uneaſy, complicated and confuſed, that words can but imperfectly deſcribe.——'Tis time for me to return; and can therefore only aſſure you that no change in my ſituation ſhall ever impair the affection with which I am,

Dear Sophia,

Your, &c.

Tueſday noon.

LOUISA WENTWORTH.

LETTER

LETTER V.

To the Rev. Mr. WENTWORTH.

DEAR BROTHER,

SINCE my laſt I have happily found a purchaſer, not only for my plantation here, but that at *Berbice* alſo; both which I have ſold to Meſſrs. ——————, merchants in Amſterdam. The firſt for ninety thouſand, and the other for one hundred thouſand guilders, currency of Holland; which I received in bills, payable at Amſterdam, on ſurrendering them; as I did that at Berbice about ten days ſince, and the other but yeſterday: the firſt of theſe bills I ſhall incloſe herewith, and the ſecond I ſhall ſend you by another conveyance; reſerving the third in my own hands. I now indulge the pleaſing expectation of ſoon reviſiting my native country, and enjoying the ſociety and affection of the beſt of parents and brothers,

and hope the ſucceſs of my enterprize will, in ſome degree, excuſe its extravagance.—Since my laſt, I have received two letters from Mr. Gordon, the extraordinary perſon that I mentioned in my laſt; and ſhall incloſe them both for your peruſal, without any obſervations of my own on their contents.—A ſhip is juſt arrived in the River, apparently from Holland; and I will diſpatch a meſſenger before I proceed any farther, in hopes of finding a letter from you.——I have it.—Dated near two months ago.—Uncle Wentworth — unhappily dead.—Has left me his perſonal eſtate, as a teſtimony of his affection.——Melancholy event.—Alas, dear uncle, brother of my deceaſed father, thou too haſt paid the debt of nature.—The increaſe of fortune that I derive from this event, as it is a teſtimony of thy love and affection, lays me under additional obligations to lament thy death, inſtead of rejoicing at the acceſſion of fortune it has given me.——Believe

lieve me, my dear brother, I am grieved at this event beyond meaſure: nor can we too much lament the loſs of a relation, whoſe character in private life (to which he was confined) was ever amiable.

"Virtuous and wiſe he was, but not ſevere;
He ſtill remembered that he was once young;
His eaſy preſence checked no decent joy:
Him even the diſſolute admired; for he
A graceful looſeneſs when he pleaſed put on,
And laughing would inſtruct. Much had he read,
Much more had ſeen; he ſtudied from the life,
And in th' original peruſed mankind."

ARMSTRONG.

I conjecture, dear brother, that my uncle's legacy, added to my preſent fortune, will render it ſuperior to yours.—We will ſettle this matter after my return, and be equal in property and affection.—The information you give me of Miſs Jackſon's being reduced to publick proſtitution, fills me with the greateſt inquietude;

tude; and if money can compenſate the miſery, which I have inconſiderately brought upon her, I will certainly endeavour to make her ample reparation.—You tell me that all the obſtacles which lately oppoſed your union with Miſs Conway are now happily removed, and that you ſoon expect the felicity of being indiſſolubly joined to the object of your love. I ſincerely congratulate you on this favourable turn of your affairs, and participate in your approaching happineſs, which will, in a conſiderable degree, compenſate the imperfection of my own.——You tell me that my friends are impatient my return: I aſſure you that I feel myſelf obliged by the intereſt they take in this particular, and it will engage me to haſten my departure as much as poſſible.——I hope to ſail from hence for Europe in about three weeks, and in ſix or ſeven, to have the pleaſure of verbally teſtifying my dutifull ſentiments to the beſt of parents;

and

and of aſſuring you in perſon of the inviolable affection with which I have the happineſs to be,

Dear Brother, &c.

Rio Demerary,
Jan. 1766.

CHARLES WENTWORTH.

LETTER from Mr. GORDON,

To CHARLES WENTWORTH, Eſq.

Incloſed in the preceding.

DEAR SIR,

AGREEABLE to my promiſe, I now commence the coreſpondence which you did me the honour to ſollicit; but which will, I fear, afford you leſs entertainment than you have perhaps imagined. Habituated only to the ſimplicity and inelegance of a ſavage language, and long unaccuſtomed to that in which I now write, my ſtile will be deſtitute of

all

all thoſe ornaments that are equally adapted to charm and miſlead the mind.—— To explain the reaſons that have determined me to chuſe the life I now lead, it will be expedient to retrace my ſteps in their progreſſion from youth to manhood: in doing this I ſhall diveſt myſelf from all reſtraint, as I am perſuaded that your ſentiments are too elevated, generous, and liberal, to diſlike any perſon merely for diſſenting from thoſe opinions which you may have adopted.

I was born of reputable parents in Scotland, and educated in all the rigid auſterity of puritaniſm, which but ill agreed with my natural diſpoſition: every Sunday appeared a day of puniſhment, and its return I conſtantly dreaded, as inducing the neceſſity of an intire change of manners, to ſupport the appearance of the moſt rigid piety; together with an invariable attendance on publick worſhip twice a day, and on the reiterated

duties

duties of domeſtic prayer, ſinging of pſalms, &c. to theſe were occaſionally added private faſtings, with other modes of mortifying the fleſh, as they piouſly termed it; or, in other words, of robbing nature of that nouriſhment which is neceſſary to ſuſtain the vital and animal functions, and thereby injuring that health which ought to be the firſt object of our ſollicitude. Theſe things appeared to me ſo unnatural, that I became diſguſted, I might ſay ſurfeited, with an exceſs of religion; and as I could not avoid the domeſtic duties of religion, I ſometimes endeavoured to perſuade my parents to diſpenſe with my attendance on publick worſhip, which in the ſevere winters of Scotland was particularly painful, on account of its tedious length, which often gave me colds and other diſorders, ariſing from obſtructed perſpiration; but the more importunate I appeared on this ſubject, the more aſſiduous were they in watching over my

conduct,

conduct, and compelling me to the ſtricteſt obſervance of duties I would gladly have avoided, as though perſuaded that the Deity could be pleaſed with the tribute of involuntary adoration. Miſtaken parents! may you not be diſappointed of thoſe bleſſings in a future life, for which you made yourſelves miſerable in this. By their conduct my averſion to the practice of (what they conſidered) religion, was confirmed, and may perhaps have in ſome degree continued to the preſent hour *; notwithſtanding

* This miſtaken conduct, I verily believe, has made more infidels than all the arguments of ſepticiſm. The extreme auſterity of puritaniſm, and the ridiculous bigottry of popery, ariſing from the ſame mental perverſion, produce ſimilar effects, equally pernicious and repugnant to true piety: the mind is naturally diſpoſed to extremes; and a man of ſenſe will naturally ſuſpect thoſe who practiſe the former, of hypocriſy or enthuſiaſm, and conſider thoſe who adhere to the latter, as the dupes of prieſtcraft; and will from thence precipitately renounce the belief

withſtanding I have uſed every endeavour to diveſt myſelf from all prejudice on this important ſubject; I muſt confeſs, however, that the repreſentations of divine wrath againſt ſinners, ſo frequently delivered from the pulpit, and the implacable vengeance with which he was inceſſantly armed by our ſpiritual paſtor, naturally inſpired me with the unamiable idea of an angry and vindictive Deity: an idea more diſhonourable to that merciful forgiving God, whom we ought to love as well as fear, than even atheiſm

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lief of revealed religion. It is this that has converted a Voltaire, D'Argens, Monteſquieu, Diderot, and many other celebrated philoſophers of popiſh countries to infidelity; and it is that was probably the ſource of Mr. Gordon's ſepticiſm.—I do not hereby mean a reflection on moderate diſſenters, nor an encouragement to irreligion in thoſe of the eſtabliſhed church, as I am fully perſuaded that epiſcopal indifference is not leſs culpable than puritanic auſterity and Romiſh ſuperſtition. An abuſe of the beſt things generates the worſt; and it is this abuſe only that I would cenſure.

itſelf.

itſelf. Better, ſays Plutarch, that men ſhould ſay, Plutarch never lived, than that he was cruel, revengeful, and unjuſt.—The enthuſiaſm of my parents was at the ſame time ſo exceſſive, that they neglected all the cares and buſineſs of life, living entirely on the produce of a ſmall family eſtate, and ſubjecting themſelves to all the various modes of ſelf-mortification, which monkiſh ſuperſtition has invented; that by rendering this life miſerable, they might ſecure eternal happineſs in the future *. The ſame prevailing

* What difference can there be between the views that governed theſe perſons, and thoſe which induce any man to forego a preſent ſenſual enjoyment, from a perſuaſion that its ſatisfaction will afterwards be repayed by one a thouſand times more deſirable? Or can a perſon in one inſtance merit Heaven more than in the other? But to ſuppoſe with them, that mankind have been created for a life, to be inceſſantly employed in importunate prayers, abſtinence, ſelf-mortification, and the auſterities of monkiſh devotion, is a ſuppoſition derived

prevailing diſpoſition induced them to deſign me for the ſervice of religion: the ſtudy of polemic divinity was, however, but ill ſuited to my natural turn; and phyſick being more generally taught

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derived from the phrenzy of religious madneſs; and is loudly contradicted every moment by the neceſſary avocations of life, and the wants, cares, paſſions, and deſires, inherent in humanity; and every perſon by whom it is imbibed, muſt not only oppoſe thoſe ſenſations which nature, for neceſſary purpoſes, has implanted in his conſtitution; but reject the evidence of his ſenſes, which ſeelingly demonſtrate that a variety of toils and cares are neceſſary to procure the means of ſubſiſtence through life, which certainly would not be the caſe if notions like theſe had a real foundation; yet ſuch is our credulity, that they have frequently prevailed; and but a few years ſince this phrenzy became ſo epidemical in ſome of our New England colonies, that preaching and praying were the conſtant occupations not only of the clergy, but laity alſo; and not only on Sundays, but every other day of the week, to the entire neglect of agriculture and all temporal concerns; ſo that univerſal famine and poverty became imminent dangers, and were only averted by the timely interpoſition of their reſpective legiſlatures.

and

and ſtudied at Edinburgh, where I had been placed, attracted my chief attention; and after ſome time, the death of of my father left me at liberty to indulge my inclinations, and apply myſelf wholly to that ſtudy. But in this I was, however, ſoon after interrupted; for notwithſtanding all the care that is taken to exclude female proſtitutes from that city, I, like many other of my fellow-ſtudents, found it eaſier to gratify than ſuppreſs thoſe deſires which nature, for the preſervation of our ſpecies, deſigned to prevail over every other conſideration: but unfortunately my indulgence in this particular, was followed by conſequences which rendered it evident, and expoſed my conduct to the cognizance and diſcipline of the *Kirk*. This I at firſt deſpiſed, but ſoon found it would bring me into ſerious difficulties, as it had already done the unfortunate woman with whom I had been connected. I therefore converted that part of my father's

eſtate

eſtate which had devolved to me, into money; and after making ſome compenſation to the woman I have but now mentioned, for the detriment to which I had in part contributed, I departed for London, to eſcape eccleſiaſtical puniſhment, and arrived there with about ſix hundred pounds, where I continued my medical ſtudies, commencing pupil to the phyſicians of one of the principal hoſpitals in that city, and alſo attending the lectures of the moſt eminent readers in the different branches of medicine there. London, however, afforded a new and unexpected ſcene of life; where religion was ſo far from being conſidered as the only buſineſs of life, that its moſt important duties ſeldom received an occaſional obſervance; whilſt the love of pleaſure, or of wealth, as the means of attaining it in the preſent ſtate of exiſtence, was the univerſal principle of action; where frivolous arts were honoured and rewarded, whilſt the uſeful were deſpiſed and neglected;

lected; a dancing-master gaining more in a day, than a labourer of the field in a month; modesty exiled; marriages a cloak for licentiousness, and openly violated; virtuous wives disconsolate, but courtezans exulting; debauchery contaminating the source of our species; the aged retaining the vices of youth; the young aged in constitution before the years of maturity; money always ready for dress and entertainment, but never to relieve the indigent or miserable; publick assemblies glaring with jewels and gold, but the streets and temples crowded with wretchedness and beggary; and every man repeating the language of virtue, but contriving the ruin of his neighbour.—Pregnant with sensations of humanity, and destitute of all artifice, even of the little cunning so necessary for self-preservation, I entered on this busy insidious stage of nature inverted; where I saw myself surrounded by thousands without one friend, and felt all the in-

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conveniences of a crowd, complicated with all the anxiety of ſolitude; "*magna civitas, magna ſolitudo.*" But the connections which I naturally formed in the courſe of my ſtudies, aſſiſted by a genteel appearance, in a few months overcame this inconvenience; and procured me a more diffuſive and expenſive acquaintance than was ſuitable to the narrowneſs of my fortune: pleaſure and gaiety have many charms, nor could I reſiſt their allurements; but ſtill I retained ſufficient prudence not to ſuffer them to obſtruct the progreſs of my ſtudies in any conſiderable degree.—— During my reſidence in London, I became acquainted with Miſs Ruſſel, a young lady of conſiderable beauty and of a pleaſing vivacity of temper, who was likewiſe intitled to five thouſand pounds on her marriage; a ſtate for which I had been ſome time inclined, provided I could enter it with an agreeable woman, poſſeſſed of a fortune proportioned to the

attendant expence of a family; becaaſe I had found celibacy inconvenient, I will venture to ſay unnatural, and had diſcovered that an intercourſe with proſtitutes was not only dangerous and expenſive, but alſo a very imperfect gratification of my deſires, and was unwilling to involve another woman in difficulties, by ſeducing her from chaſtity: judging therefore that Miſs Ruſſel was capable of inſpiring me with a paſſion ſufficiently ardent for ſecuring our nuptial felicity, I ſeriouſly reſolved to addreſs her with propoſals of marriage: but having diſcovered that modeſty, though univerſally commended, was univerſally neglected, but more eſpecially by the fair ſex; whilſt impudence, as univerſally decried, was always ſucceſsful; I reſolved to attain that qualification, but ſoon found that native, genuine impudence, that enviable accompliſhment among civilized nations, is inimitable; and all my attempts to aſſume it were ſo aukward, as to diſcover the

the counterfeit, and compel me to abandon its purſuit. But though I deſpaired of ſucceſs in this attempt, my hopes of gaining Miſs Ruſſel, notwithſtanding the obſtacle of my modeſty, were in no degree impaired; and in a few months ſhe promiſed me her hand, though ſhe always poſtponed the time of executing her promiſe, for various reaſons, until near two years had elapſed from the time I had commenced her ſuitor; buſineſs at that time obliged me to go into the country for a fortnight, and ſhe fixed the week after my return for the celebration of our nuptials: but on my arrival in town, I found her already married to a dancing-maſter, who except his human form, and caper-cutting accompliſhments, had no qualifications ſuperior to thoſe of ſome of the monkies in Guiana. My ſurprize at this event was not greater than my diſappointment, which was, indeed, ſevere; becauſe the promiſe Miſs Ruſſel had made me of her hand, and

my dependance on her fulfilling it, had induced me to ſtay longer in London than was neceſſary for the completion of my medical ſtudies; and I had thereby not only neglected eſtabliſhing myſelf in the buſineſs of my profeſſion, but had nearly expended all my little fortune, by the various amuſements to which love and gallantry with her had engaged me. The mortification of this diſappointment, together with the gloomy proſpect of life that lay before me, naturally created no ſmall uneaſineſs in my mind. As to my paſſion for Miſs Ruſſel, it was ſuppreſſed with more facility; the loſs of a woman who could ſo inconſiderately throw herſelf away on a moſt worthleſs man, did not appear to me a reaſonable cauſe of anxiety: *La Bruyere*, though ſufficiently ſenſible to the charms of female beauty, declares that its caprice is a natural antidote to its poiſon; ſo I found it in the preſent caſe; the ſilly choice and capricious behaviour of Miſs Ruſſel, ſerved

to

to awaken me from the abſurdity of my prepoſſeſſion in her favour; I examined, and found that my paſſion had its origin in the little affectations of coquetry, which a warm imagination had improved into real charms! and by thus knowing the cauſe of my diſtemper, reaſon effected my cure, and reſtored my priſtine independance. With how much utility might this example be imitated by the generality of diſappointed lovers, who are captivated rather by imaginary than real charms! Though I could not but be diſpleaſed at Miſs Ruſſel's behaviour towards me, yet the puniſhment which followed her imprudent choice, was more than ſufficient to convert my reſentment to pity, and amply verified the following lines of Dr. Young.

"If you reſent, and wiſh a *woman* ill,
But turn her o'er one moment to her *will*."

In a few months after her marriage with the dancing-maſter, he, as I have

ſince heard, after having diſſipated a part of her fortune in gaiety, and diſcharging his former debts, ſuddenly left her to experience the miſeries of want, and expended the remainder in a foreign country.—But to return to my own affairs; while I was agitated by the uneaſineſs of my late diſappointment, and doubtful where to fix myſelf, or what courſe of life to purſue, I had ſpent an evening with ſome of my acquaintance at a tatern in Weſtminſter, hoping that wine and gay ſociety would alleviate the weight of my uneaſineſs: the clock had ſtruck two before we ſeparated; and I entered the ſtreet oppreſſed with painful reflections, which all my endeavours had been unable to diſſipate; in my way home I returned alone through the Strand and Fleet-ſtreet, treading the ſteps where pomp and vanity had paſſed but a few hours before, with all the inſolence and pageantry of wealth. But theſe no longer appeared, nor did the hurry, the noiſe,

noiſe, and rattle of paſſing crowds and rowling carriages, any longer diſturb contemplation: all was ſilent and ſolitary; the happy were at reſt; the labourer had exchanged his toil for the bleſſings of peaceful ſlumber, and the ſleeping watchman forgot his hour; the noiſe and buſtle of human pride had vaniſhed, and nothing was awake but guilt, riot, and miſery: a melancholy gloom every where prevailed, and none appeared but the lewd, diſhoneſt, or wretched, diſperſed here and there, and no longer wearing even the maſk of decency; ſome of them perhaps ſtrangers or orphans, making the ſtreets their beds, and ſeeking a momentary oblivion to their miſeries, in every vacant receptacle; but the greater number were ſhivering females, whoſe rags afforded but a partial covering to their nakedneſs, who having perhaps been once the hope and joy of reputable or honeſt parents, had been flattered, ſeduced, and abandoned to the

moſt abject proſtitution; compelled to encounter the aſperities of winter, and ſeek a ſcanty morſel, by ſolliciting even the loweſt of men to a commerce, for which hunger muſt have left them no appetite, and for which their extreme wretchedneſs muſt have made them ſo diſqualified: poor houſeleſs wretches! Diſowned by the world, perſecuted by ſubordinate power, and oppreſſed even by thoſe ſocial inſtitutions from which others derive ſecurity *. And all theſe wretched ſpectacles, thought I, have been created by poverty; and how ſoon may I, unpitied, ſuffer thoſe wants which oppreſs others with ſuch complicated miſeries? The time may be near; the pittance

* There is a ſimilitude between ſome of theſe reflections, and thoſe contained in a Night Piece written by Dr. Goldſmith; whether they were naturally ſuggeſted to Mr. Gordon by the ſame objects, or whether he had ſeen the piece in queſtion, the reader may determine.

that

that is now left me, will be but a momentary ſecurity againſt the horrors of penury: indulging theſe painful reflections, I arrived at the door of my lodging, and knocked for admiſſion, but before this could be obtained, with inexpreſſible ſurprize I found myſelf arreſted for the debt of an acquaintance, who (before my late diſappointment) had been in danger of a priſon through the failure of a remittance, which he pretended to expect from his friends; and as I thought him poſſeſſed of too much integrity to let me become a ſufferer by doing a good action, and had therefore joined with him in a promiſſory note for the payment of the debt which had that day become due, and for which I then found myſelf arreſted, he having fled the evening before, though I was ignorant of the extent of his ingratitude. It will be eaſier to conceive than deſcribe the ſenſations that I felt on this occaſion; my former melancholy was now aggravated by the

horrors of a jail, which my inexperienced frighted imagination painted as conſequences that I muſt ſoon expect. In this ſtate of mind I was conducted to a ſpunging-houſe, where my reception in no reſpect contributed to diminiſh my uneaſineſs. The family had been ſome hours aſleep, and therefore I was immediately ſhown to a room with a dirty bed and iron bars at its windows; the houſekeeper waited till I was undreſſed, and then took away my candle, leſt (as I ſuppoſe) I ſhould ſet the houſe on fire to make my eſcape, and then locked the door, and afterwards bolted it on the oppoſite ſide: and thus left me to my own reflections for the remainder of the night; theſe had already been diverted from myſelf by the iron bars, the turning of the lock, and the grating noiſe of the bolt; and from thence were converted towards the means of freeing myſelf from the preſent confinement; the firſt I had ever before ſuffered. The debt

debt for which I was in arreſt, amounted to ſeventy-five pounds; and all that I poſſeſſed, except my cloaths, and a few guineas in my pocket, was no more than one hundred pounds, and that had been lent on intereſt to a Scotch gentleman, with whom it was, indeed, ſufficiently ſecure, but who was then unfortunately in Scotland, though expected in town very ſoon, and until his return I ſaw no method of recovering my liberty; and therefore anticipated in idea all the horrors of impriſonment for ſeveral weeks; but was at length delivered from theſe painful ſenſations, by the bleſſings of balmy ſleep, that powerful reſtorer of exhauſted ſtrength, whoſe languid charm ſuſpends our cares, baniſhes our ſorrows, and relieves our ſevereſt pains.—Early the next morning I awoke to a ſenſe of my diſagreeable ſituation, from which I had been for a while relieved; and as the ideas it excited were very unpleaſing, I roſe and dreſſed myſelf; but on at-

tempting to open the door I found it ſtill locked, and was therefore compelled to wait in impatient expectation 'till near ten o'clock, when our *Cerberus* with his keys enlarged the extent of my confinement, and gave me an opportunity of deſcending to the hall, the outer door of which was, however, ſufficiently ſecured by locks; and from the windows I could perceive that my ſituation was oppoſite to the Compter in Wood-ſtreet, a place that formed a very diſagreeable proſpect, as I knew that after four-and-twenty hours were expired, it would be in the power of my bailiff to lodge me in that or another equally unpleaſing receptacle. A few minutes brought down the reſt of my companions in adverſity, who were pretty numerous; and as people in affliction ſeldom are very attentive to ceremonious reſtraints, we ſoon formed an acquaintance, in which every one communicated to the others as much of his ſituation as he choſe. The firſt day the keeper

of

of this "Houſe of Safety," as it was called, appeared tolerably civil to me, except in the extravagance of his prices; but on the following, when going to priſon, was the only alternative to my ſtaying there, I experienced the ſame inſolent treatment which ſome of my companions had before received. The proviſion made for our entertainment, notwithſtanding the price at which it was charged, was the worſt I had ever ſeen ſerved in London; and if any preſumed to complain of it, he was threatened with a removal to the Compter, on the oppoſite ſide of the way; add to this, that our bailiff frequently ſollicited pecuniary gratifications for their indulgence in permitting us to ſtay out of priſon after the time allowed by law had elapſed; and theſe we thought ourſelves obliged to make them, though ſenſible that they received an allowance from our keeper for bringing each of us to his houſe, out of the extravagant profits he thereby gained;

and

and indeed bailiffs and keepers of Spunging-houſes, by their familiarity with the ſufferings of mankind, become ſo ſteeled againſt the tender ſenſations of humanity, that they can ſee with the greateſt obduracy, the greateſt objects of commiſeration, and without the leaſt remorſe can live by oppreſſing the wretched. I, however, ſoon became ſenſible that confinement, whether in a priſon, or, "a Houſe of Safety," was but little different, but that if the latter was in ſome degree more eligible, its advantages were in no manner equal to the inſolence and extortions by which it was purchaſed; and therefore ſignified my intention of going to the Compter. This was no ſooner known, than the bailiff who before had demanded money for indulging my ſtay, and the houſe-keeper who had treated me with unmerited inſolence, uſed every perſuaſion to divert me from my intention; aggravating the miſeries of a jail, and repreſenting it as infeſted with a contagious

gious fever, crowded, and having no vacant rooms or beds: by theſe and other objections they ſucceeded in altering my reſolution, with which they were doubtleſs pleaſed, becauſe I had ſtill a little money remaining, though perhaps leſs than they imagined; but when this was expended, I was inſtantly hurried to priſon, that horrid receptacle generated in civilized ſocieties for depriving its members of the moſt important of their natural rights. How many wretched beings did I not there diſcover, emaciated by their paſt and the proſpect of their future miſeries, and diſeaſed by the inſalubrious exhalations they had long inſpired in that damp and dreary abode, ſecluded from the ſociety of mankind, injured in reputation, and denied the illuſive joys of hope, the conſolations of friendſhip, and even the neceſſaries of life. Horrid ſepulchres! in which the living are inter'd, who thinking themſelves conſigned to death, either

await

await it as a bleſſing, or expect it as a puniſhment. And even theſe miſeries, great as they be, are aggravated by being communicated through the tender connections of ſuffering families: children lamenting the captivity of their fathers, and fathers the diſtreſſes of their wives and children! Deteſted be thoſe ſocial inſtitutions which conſign individuals to wretchedneſs like this, for no other crime than that of being poor, and unable to ſatisfy the demands of their creditors; and curſt be thoſe mercileſs wretches who avail themſelves of a power communicated by theſe inſtitutions, to gratify the infernal ſuggeſtions of tyranny or revenge; for to what other end can a man be deprived of the rights of nature, of liberty, and its bleſſed appendages; when it is univerſally known, that impriſonment can enable no perſon to pay his debts? But why is this power granted when it can produce

duce no good, and is ſo often perverted to the injury of others * ?—But leaving this

* The multitudes who crowd the jails in this kingdom, and by their confinement are not only rendered uſeleſs to themſelves, but a burthen to the ſtate, create an important evil that loudly demands the attention of the legiſlature. The acts of inſolvency that have been occaſionally made, are but very ineffectual remedies, and the evil ſtill continues to the reproach of our laws and government. That thoſe who have ſufficient property ſhould be impriſoned 'till their debts are duly paid, is but reaſonable; but that thoſe who have it not, ſhould be confined during the pleaſure of their creditors, and deprived of all means of acquiring it, is certainly repugnant to juſtice, and the policy of a well-governed ſociety. Did I not fear the imputation of preſumption, I would venture to propoſe an adequate remedy for this evil; but, perhaps, this fear ought not to deter any perſon from doing a thing which may poſſibly be of ſervice to the community. Let me obſerve then, that property might be reaſonably ſecured, and our priſons freed from thoſe ſuffering multitudes with which they are ſo frequently crowded; if upon arreſting a man for debt, he was permitted to return to the management of his own concerns, on entering into a recognizance for his own appearance, at the ſame time making it felony without benefit of clergy, to fail in

this queſtion to be anſwered by the legiſlators of civilized ſocieties, let me return

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in ſurrendering himſelf to the judgment of the court where his cauſe depended; and if a debtor in execution might after ſix months impriſonment, recover his liberty, by ſurrendering all his effects, expectances, &c. for the benefit of his creditors, on oath, making the ſmalleſt ſecretion felony alſo; when a debtor has done this, what greater ſatisfaction can he give his creditors, or why ſhould they be allowed to conſign him to the horrors of a priſon, 'till the meridian of life is over, and he diſabled from ever ſucceeding in life. I am aware how many are of opinion, that long impriſonment is but a juſt puniſhment for thoſe who will have the temerity to incur debts they are unable to diſcharge; but granting this to be true, the ſame law that puniſhes theſe, oppreſſes thoſe, who by unavoidable misfortunes have incured the like inſolvency, and confounds the innocent with the guilty. A ſenſe of preſent want will often engage people to employ all their credit to relieve them, at the expence even of future impriſonment and loſs of freedom; but would it not be more eligible to diminiſh the eaſe with which theſe people gain credit, (by leſſening the power of their creditors over their perſons) than to ſuffer them to be rendered uſeleſs to themſelves and the publick, by confinement for one imprudent action? I would not, however,

turn to my own ſituation, which on various accounts, was ſufficiently diſagreeable, but eſpecially on that of wanting money for ſubſiſtence; for whatever many people may think, it is certainly neceſſary to *eat* in a priſon; and that I might do this, I was forced to recur to the expedient of pawning my cloaths, a practice to which, till then, I had been a ſtranger. I ſoon, however, found that a ſenſe of my own difficulties, and thoſe

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however, exempt the debtor who might be diſcharged on ſurrendering his effects, from afterwards paying the full debts, if ever he became able, as nothing but continual inability can juſtly cancel them; and I am perſuaded, that all the abuſes of the Bankrupt Act have ariſen ſolely by this exemption from future payment. I ſhould have propoſed, that debtors might be immediately diſcharged upon making this ſurrender; but I judged it reaſonable to expoſe them to a ſhort term of impriſonment, to reſtrain them from abuſing their credit to the injury of others; and am perſuaded, that thoſe who cannot be reſtrained by the fear of confinement for ſix months, will not regard it for a longer term.

of my companions in confinement, diminiſhed daily, and in the term of a week I was but little affected by my ſituation; and believe, in reality, that I was much eaſier and leſs chagrined, than I have been at a very trivial diſappointment, under much leſs embarraſſing circumſtances. The human mind is ſo formed, that a ſmall degree of force will impel it to a certain degree of pleaſure or pain, beyond which no impetus, however forcible, will make it excede: man is ſuſpended in a medium of incidents, which by their effects, create either pleaſure or pain; by theſe he is ever impreſſed to a certain degree, as by the incumbent atmoſphere; and according to the prevalence of the former or latter, he conſiders us happy or miſerable. But as our ideas of theſe *accidents* are only comparative, whenever the mind is for a ſeaſon depreſſed by pain, its uneaſineſs is again repayed by recovering from the depreſſion; or if that never happens, the mind

mind ſoon becomes familiar with its fallen ſtate, and then regains it former contentment. The ſame effects ariſe from an elevation by pleaſure: gratified ambition will create momentary ſenſations of happineſs; but the ſoul, though at firſt elated by the event, every hour perceives a diminution of its influence, till familiarity deprives it of the power of pleaſing. An inattention to this important truth, is the ſource of all that inquietude we ſuffer, either from the impoſſibility of attaining the power, riches, or honour, with which our ſuperiors are inveſted; or the fear of falling to that inferior ſtate in which others are placed. Even ſlavery itſelf is not without its pleaſures; the appetite which labour creates, gives to the coarſeſt food a reliſh equal to that of a luxurious banquet; and the ſlave from the ſucceſs of thoſe little concerns, which even that ſtate allows, derives all the ſatisfaction that a monarch receives from extending his dominions,

minions, or bleſſing his ſubjects; if his freedom is abridged, ſo is the circle of his cares; and from the ſmiles of his maſter he feels all the ſatisfaction that a miniſter can receive from the favour of his ſovereign. Even in the moſt abject condition of life, there is a conſolation in knowing that we cannot be more wretched, and the hopes of exchanging our preſent for a better ſtate, alleviate its ills: the poignancy of pain is repayed by the joys of ſucceeding eaſe; and neither the pleaſures of life yield that felicity which we vainly hope, nor its evils thoſe pangs we fooliſhly dread; the righteous Deity having equally diſtributed the joys and ills of life, ſo that except pain, ſickneſs, or real want, no change of external circumſtances can augment or impair our felicity.—After I had ſeen one month elapſe in confinement, the gentleman with whom the little remainder of my fortune was depoſited, arrived in town, and gave me the

the means of recovering my liberty. The joy I felt on this occaſion was, perhaps, never equalled by the moſt fortunate event of my life; I rambled over the town for ſeveral hours, to uſe my freedom, pleaſed at every ſtep I could make without the reſtraint of a priſon wall. When the novelty of freedom was a little over, I retired to the lodgings I had before occupied, and where I had yet a few things remaining. But though I found them in the poſſeſſion of another perſon, I procured a bed in the houſe for that night. During my confinement I had avoided ſending for aſſiſtance to any of my friends, though they had before often offered it when they knew I had no need of it; my experience in life had taught me, that revealing my wants, was by no means the way to obtain relief; but had the caſe been otherwiſe, I would not have choſe to excite their compaſſion at the expence of their friendſhip; for pity and eſteem are ſentiments incompatible

tible with each other, and however the mind may for a moment fluctuate between them, one will ſoon annihilate the other. I was likewiſe ſenſible that every obligation a man receives, in ſome meaſure ſtrips him from his native dignity and independence, and had therefore endeavoured, as much as poſſible, to conceal my misfortunes; but I diſcovered that enſuing day, that all my attempts for that purpoſe had been unſucceſsful; for wherever I went I found the knowledge of my ſituation had gone before me, and I was avoided by my acquaintance as an infection. Poverty itſelf I could have ſupported, but complicated with contempt, it became intolerable: vanity may excite us to bear misfortunes, whilſt applauding friends, or an admiring world, are ſpectators of our fortitude; but in the vale of obſcurity, deſerted and deſpiſed by all, who can patiently ſupport their pains? The novelty of freedom was gone, and I left to reflect

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on my own ſituation, which appeared as unhappy as when I had been in priſon; though but a few days before I had envied the felicity of the wretch, who, without controul, could walk through the ſtreets, and ſollicit alms from the paſſing croud. Thus it ever is with the reſtleſs mind: the ſlave fancies happineſs in freedom; that obtained, he looks for it in the conveniences of life, afterwards in its luxuries; and when all theſe are attained, he ſeeks for it in dignity and power. All that remained to me, after freeing myſelf from priſon, and my cloaths from *pawn*, was fifteen guineas; and with theſe I retired to an obſcure lodging, diſguſted at a venal world, that eſteem the want of wealth as a want of virtue, to reſolve on the future courſe of my life. Though I was to be humble, my education had not been ſuch as could make me callous to contempt; and a conſciouſneſs of the rectitude of my intentions told me, that though I was unfortunate, it was not

becauſe I was more undeſerving than others; nor was my native pride depreſſed by a ſenſe of my poverty. I beheld in idea Cincinatus, the great dictator, preparing on his hearth a homely repaſt with thoſe hands that had ſubdued the enemies of his country, and born the triumphal laurel; I reflected that Socrates the *reformer*, and Memmius Agrippa, the *arbiter* of his country, had been the one maintained, and the other buried by contribution; and that the great Scipio Africanus had been ſo poor, that the portions of his daughters were paid by the publick: who then, thought I, would repine at adoption into a family that has been honoured by ſuch illuſtrious anceſtors? But theſe reflections, though for a while they ſerved to ſooth my vanity, would by no means gratify the ſenſations of hunger; and I ſoon found it neceſſary to think of ſome eſtabliſhment by which I might earn the means of ſubſiſtence; and knowing it would be impoſſible to

ſettle myſelf in the buſineſs of my profeſſion in Great Britain, ſo ſpeedily as my neceſſities required, I reſolved on viſiting one of the Indies, and a few moments reflection induced me to prefer the Weſt; as I knew the other to be overſtocked with adventurers, and was alſo ſenſible that I had not ſufficient intereſt to procure that favour, which alone can render the greateſt abilities ſucceſsful in that quarter of the world, in the preſent venal age. I therefore augmented the ſmall ſum of money I had yet left, by ſelling ſome unneceſſary articles of dreſs and gaiety; and, with all poſſible frugality, tranſported myſelf to Barbadoes. "*Per mare pauperim fugiens per ſaxa, per ignes.*" My ſorrows I prudently left behind me in my native country, and during my paſſage, indulged the moſt flattering hopes of ſucceſs in my enterprize; by which my ſpirits were exhilarated, and all my faculties recovered from their late

depreſſion. Happy pliability of the human mind, that can embrace thoſe pleaſing illuſions which cheat anxiety and ſorrow of their tedious moments! Long ſince had my days been numbered, had I not trod ſo often on this enchanted ground: whenever the paths of life are too rugged for my feet, I conſtantly retire to the ſmooth meanders, which fancy has ſtrewed with the flowers of viſionary delight, and return refreſhed and invigorated: "*ſurely this is not walking in a vain ſhadow.*" *—On my arrival at Barbadoes, I found that ſeveral new plantations were forming (by gentlemen belonging to that iſland) in Demerary, the ſettlement of which had been but lately began, and was adviſed to come hither, as I accordingly did; and engaged myſelf for a little time in the buſineſs of my profeſſion, till I became acquainted with

* See Yorick's Sentimental journey.

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the Indians ; and the ſimplicity and happineſs of their lives and manners, ſo conformable to the primitive inſtitutions of nature, co-operating with the diſguſt I had before conceived for civilization, engaged me to retire with them to the woods of Guiana, and fix my reſidence in the place where you did me the favour of a viſit. Here, by the ſervices which my profeſſion has enabled me to render them, aſſiſted by ſome of the moſt ſurprizing phenomena of chemiſtry, natural magic and electricity, I have inſpired them with both love and reſpect, and ſecured my own ſafety, freedom, and independence: and here I have employed myſelf in ranging the delightful fields of nature, contemplating her various productions, and comparing her ordinary operations with thoſe extraordinary effects in which ſhe eludes the ſagacity of finite reaſon. And in this employment I have enjoyed ſuch calm, ſolid, and rational happineſs, that I have no wiſh or deſire ever to

change my ſphere of life *. In this ſtate, conſcious that there is no virtue in

* Leſt the pampered ſons of luxury, who are inſenſible to the pleaſures of an eaſy, unconſtrained, independent life, ſuch as the American Indians enjoy, ſhould conſider Mr. Gordon's deſerting the advantages of ſociety, and what we conſider as an improved life, I ſhall ſubjoin a fact to which I was myſelf an eye witneſs. At colonel Boquet's expedition againſt the Ohio Indians in 1764, when, by the conditions of peace, they were obliged to reſtore their captives, many among them conſidered their return to their friends and countrymen as a new captivity; and not only parted from the ſavages with reluctance, but with tears. The Shawaneſe found it neceſſary to bind ſeveral of their priſoners, and force them to the camp; and ſeveral women who had been delivered up, afterwards found means to eſcape to the Indian town; and others who could not effect this, clung to their ſavage friends, refuſing to part; and continued many days, making the bittereſt lamentations, and refuſing all ſuſtenance. Nor did the Indians in their turn diſcover leſs affection for their departing captives, whom they delivered up with the utmoſt reluctance and torrents of tears, viſiting them daily, during their ſtay in camp, and preſenting them with corn, meat, ſkins, horſes, and every thing beſides that they could poſſibly ſpare. They alſo did more; they

in reſiſting our natural appetites; and that, to ſatisfy their demands, is the only

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they even ſollicited and obtained leave to accompany them on their return home with the army; and employed themſelves in hunting, and bringing proviſions for them on the roads; and a young Indian of the Mingo tribe, having formed an attachment to a female captive belonging to Virginia, and been permitted to call her his wife, gave an inſtance of love that appears romantic; for againſt all remonſtrances of the imminent danger of his approaching the frontiers of our colonies, he perſiſted in following her, at the riſk of being murdered by the ſurviving relations of many unfortunate perſons, who had been ſcalped or captivated by the warriors of his nation. 'Tis certain the ferocity of theſe ſavages is terrible in war; but in peace their kindneſs and humanity are virtues worthy of imitation by thoſe who glory in chriſtianity and civilization. When either affection or caprice determines them to give life to a priſoner, they give every thing, which in their opinion, belongs to it; he is at once incorporated with them, and is in every reſpect treated like themſelves: the infants are adopted by ſome among them, and treated like children of their own body; and no woman thus ſaved, is reſerved from baſe motives, or her honour ever violated.

way to avoid their importunity, I have taken a female companion from among the Indians, and for ten years we have cohabited as man and wife; united agreeable to the laws of nature, without any other obligation than that of conſtant mutual affection; the poſſibility of parting, alarms each of us, and our fears of diſpleaſing each other, tempered by the aſſurance of mutual love, produces reciprocal deference, condeſcenſion, and aſſiduity to pleaſe; which afford conſtant fuel to the amorous fire, that ſo long has warmed our breaſts. The facility of ſeparating, unites us more ſtrongly; all our endearments are more pleaſing, becauſe they are voluntary, and free from that diſguſt which is always created by a ſenſe of duty.——This is an union of hearts, nor do the dictates of nature require any other. What is there under the yoke of marriage, preferable to this, except its indiſſolubility? But is not a

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voluntary union, founded on mutual tenderneſs, more pure, honourable, and holy, than one that is only ſecured by conſtraint? I muſt, however, acknowledge, that were I in a ſtate of ſociety, I would not cohabit with a woman I loved, in a manner that would diſhonour her, or become the father of children, whom the world would deſpiſe for illegitimacy. No, I would then marry; but in a ſtate of nature, as I now live, I think it ſufficient to obey the laws of nature.—I find I have wrote a long, and I fear unentertaining letter; but ſhould you think otherwiſe, I will again reſume my pen on any ſubject you may deſire; for though I have deſerted civilized ſociety, I ſhall be always pleaſed by an intercourſe with thoſe few who are in it, that have ſufficient liberality to ſoar above vulgar prejudices; and regardleſs of his ſpeculative opinions, can eſteem a man, who, whatever may be his imperfections,

is, in reality, a friend to truth and mankind.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Your ſincere friend,

JAMES GORDON.

TO CHARLES WENTWORTH, Eſq.

Incloſed with the preceding.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR favour I have received, and am pleaſed at the entertainment you profeſs to have received by my former letter, as well as at the approbation with which you have honoured ſome of the reflections contained therein.—You deſire to know in what conſiſts the happineſs of that ſavage life to which I am ſo firmly attached:

attached: to gratify your curioſity on this ſubject, I ſhall be neceſſarily engaged in a very complicated taſk, which I can no way diſcharge ſo readily as by reviewing the advantages and evils attending the ſtates of nature and ſociety; as the latter is generally conſidered as an improvement on the former, it ſhall be the firſt object of my conſideration.

Mankind, ever ſince the exiſtence of families, have been doubtleſs formed into parental ſocieties, cemented by natural affection and mutual convenience; in theſe, individuals reciprocally communicated and received all the advantages reſulting from ſocial union, paternal arbitration, and mutual aſſiſtance; this was the ſpecies and degree of ſociety for which nature deſigned us, and for which ſhe had provided ſufficient bands of union in our natural wants, paſſions, and affections. This then is a natural ſociety, and that ſtate which conſtitutes the hap-

pineſs of thoſe Indians with whom I have choſen my reſidence. Unhappily, however, the greateſt part of mankind, either through force or folly, have been formed into national or political ſocieties, for which nature has provided no cement or bond of union; and therefore to ſupply this defect, laws have been enacted, and magiſtrates inſtituted, to enforce their obſervance by pains and penalties. To determine whether mankind have been benefited by the inſtitution of political ſociety, it will be neceſſary to conſider its attendant ills and advantages, and compare them with thoſe that are enjoyed or ſuffered by the few who yet continue in a ſtate of natural ſociety; the conveniences or diſadvantages of the former ſtate, I ſhall draw from the moſt refined and civilized of the preſent European nations, particularly Great-Britain; (and in doing this, your own knowledge of that country will render it unneceſſary for me to deſcend to minute

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particulars.) The latter I ſhall deduce from the ſimple unlettered aboriginal inhabitants of Guiana; not ſuch as they are repreſented by partial or viſionary deſcriptions, but ſuch as my own experience and obſervations prove them in reality to be.—The hiſtory, or exterior of civil ſociety, affords little elſe than a ſpectacle of wars, carnage, and deſtruction, which ambition, revenge, or religious intolerance have generated; diverſified by the riſe and fall of empires, with the viciſſitudes in the conditions of individuals, who have either profited or ſuffered by the folly, malice, and perfidy of mankind. If, as has been pretended, mankind have entered into ſociety for their preſervation, the end has been very imperfectly obtained, ſince their mutual deſtruction has invariably been the conſequence of their combination. Families have indeed been formed into kingdoms, and thoſe kingdoms into armies, and oppoſed to each other in a hoſtile manner:

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in a ſtate of nature indeed, individuals occaſionally murder each other; but in civilized ſocieties, whole nations are martialed, and led on to mutual butchery, deſolating kingdoms, converting cities to foreſts, and almoſt extirpating the human ſpecies. The truth of this will be confirmed by a thouſand painful inſtances, which your own knowledge of hiſtory will ſuggeſt: but civil ſociety has introduced other evils more horrible even than that monſtrous carnage which ſhocks our humanity and ſtaggers our belief. Survey the *dungeons*, *racks*, *gibbets*, *chains*, *whips*, and other inſtruments of ſocial torture, which cultivated reaſon has invented, with which every political ſociety is provided, and to which thouſands are annually victims. None of theſe horrid inſtruments of miſery were ever ſeen in the regions of Guiana, before European avarice diſturbed its natives in their happy ſecluſion.—— Civil ſociety, likewiſe, pretends to have made laws

laws for the ſupport of right, and to defend the weak and poor againſt the rich and powerful: if this was indeed their origin, it is by no means the purpoſe to which they are applied; on the contrary, the tedious, vexatious, and expenſive manner by which juſtice can alone be obtained, is often more pernicious to contending parties, than the moſt unfavourable deciſion; whilſt it converts the laws into a moſt powerful weapon in the hands of the rich for oppreſſing the poor, by thoſe very inſtruments which ought to protect and defend them; and which it is pretended were made for that purpoſe. Thus the poor (who are always the majority) are, in effect, deprived of all protection from the laws of ſociety, though ſubject to all the penalties annexed to a breach of them; and though the rich may violate them with impunity, what can ſave the poor tranſgreſſor? In his perſon the ſtate will require an example of rigid juſtice,

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to deter others, and the friendleſs wretch will ſuffer the rigour of *exemplary vengeance.* —— Political ſociety has, likewiſe, given being to property, and the diſtinctions of rich and poor, which have been the ſource of almoſt all the vices and crimes that diſgrace civilized nations; by introducing luxury, with all her train of artifical pleaſures and enjoyments, which have ſtimulated our paſſions, created inordinate deſires, and rendered us ſlaves to a thouſand unnatural wants, which both expoſe us to unneceſſary diſcontent and anxiety, and tempt us to perpetrate the moſt atrocious crimes for their gratification. The ſame unequal diſtribution of property and power, in which luxury has its ſource, has rendered the poor, who are by far the moſt numerous, ſlaves to the rich; and made it the whole buſineſs of their lives to adminſter to the folly, idleneſs, and luxury of thoſe from whom they receive no ſervices in return. I have heard it frequently

quently obſerved, that every uſeleſs inhabitant of a ſtate is a burthen to it, and deſerves to be exterminated from the ſociety as a pernicious member: but how numerous are theſe members in every luxurious ſtate; and what elſe are all thoſe, who without uſefully employing thoſe faculties which God and nature deſigned for action, are by this unequal, unnatural, and (I will venture to ſay) unjuſt diſtribution of property, enabled to live in luxury and idleneſs, tyrannizing over thoſe by whoſe toil they are ſupported in this unnatural eaſe and ſplendour? Can any thing be more unjuſt, than that thoſe who labour moſt, ſhould, as invariably happens in theſe circumſtances, enjoy the feweſt conveniences of life?—The ſame cauſes which generate luxury, produce that refinement in our manners, which univerſally occaſions a fallacious and ſervile conformity of character and conduct; introduces politeneſs, decorum, ceremony and faſhion,

ion, with their ſeveral laws, which demand an implicit obedience, and are ſo many obſtacles to a conformity with the dictates of reaſon and virtue; and obſcures our natural diſpoſitions, deſtroying that mutual confidence which is neceſſary to ſocial happineſs, and rendering it unſafe to truſt the probity of any man, till we have diſcovered proofs of his integrity on ſome trying occaſion. This refinement of manners is invariably complicated with the cultivation of arts and ſciences, which indeed have their origin in thoſe paſſions, to whoſe gratification they are applied; but it is a truth confirmed by the experience of all nations in all ages, that every ſtate ſupported by luxury and arts, has ultimately corrupted, and either ſunk by its own weight, or been cut down by the barbarian ſcymetar; whilſt thoſe whom ignorance or neceſſity confined to their natural ſtate, have retained their primitive freedom by mediocrity, and their innocence of manners

ners by ignorance. The genealogy of ſciences and arts, as drawn by Rouſſeau *, ſhews their origin from luxury and idleneſs, which have their ſource in that wealth which reſults from inequality, the fruitful but factitious parent of vice; from which it is eaſy to infer, that they have enervated the mental and corporeal faculties of all thoſe by whom they have been cultivated, and diveſted humanity from the proper objects of its purſuit; as profligacy of manners and ſlavery have ever ſucceeded learning and luxury, and become the ſcourge of our ambitious endeavours, to emerge from that ignorance and ſimplicity in which we were originally placed. I do not however mean, that in ſtates where luxury already prevails, arts and ſciences are to be proſcribed; that phantom of virtue which philoſophy generates, annihilated;

* Voyez Obſervat. ſur la reponſe du Roi Staniſlaus.

or

or that urbanity of manners which the ſciences inſinuate, ruſticated. There is a brutal ignorance as pernicious to mortals, as it is reproachful to the human capacity; and this is more eſpecially deſtructive among thoſe who are engaged in civil ſociety. In theſe circumſtances, therefore, the arts and ſciences directed to their proper ends, conduce to enjoyment of life, and ought to be encouraged as the beſt antidote to the poiſons of idleneſs and inequality; whilſt all ſollicitouſly promote a ſubmiſſion to decency, the vicegerent of virtue.——In enumerating the evils of political ſociety, I omitted the oppreſſive exerciſe of that delegated authority, by which (in monarchial governments eſpecially) human nature is debaſed into brutality; fear becoming the only impulſe to action. I likewiſe omitted thoſe titles, and other unnatural diſtinctions by which mankind are inſulted; and alſo the ravages which are committed in the interior

terior of ſociety, by ambition, avarice, fraud, perfidy, and injuſtice; vices unknown in a ſtate of nature. Enough has been ſaid, however, to prove that civil ſociety, in every form, has made the majority the property of a few, and introduced unnatural wants, unneceſſary cares, factitious diſeaſes, and new vices; abridging the lives of millions, and rendering millions more abject and miſerable. 'Tis the glory of civilization, to have congregated the ſcattered inhabitants of the earth, and united them in towns and cities, thoſe unnatural aſſemblages, diſtinguiſhed by luxury and vice; happy, however, would it be, if they were again diſperſed in their ſylvan cottages, and reſtored to their primitive ſimplicity and innocence. They have been aſſembled into cities to defraud, and into armies to murder each other; from hunters and fiſhers of beaſts, they have been converted to hunters and fiſhers of men; they have been made wiſer, but not more virtuous;

virtuous; naturally innocent and ignorant, they have been inſtructed how to perpetrate fraud and injuſtice with greater art, ſecrecy, and ſucceſs; they have indeed formed a variety of ſalutary laws to diſcourage vice, but they firſt introduced it; and have invented as many ſevere puniſhments againſt the commiſſion of crimes, but they firſt created the temptation to evil. In ſhort, my own experience in life has taught me to deteſt ſocial inſtitutions as unneceſſary, grievous, and pernicious; being fully convinced that the advantages they promiſe, are wholly imaginary, whilſt the evils they create, have but too much reality. They promiſe to preſerve us from violence, but not only arm nations for their mutual deſtruction, but leave individuals to ſuffer all the evils of private malice and revenge, as greatly as in a ſtate of nature; ſince they afford no ſecurity againſt violence, except the fear of future puniſhment. But no man, who is villain enough

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to meditate my murder, will be deterred by the puniſhment of laws, which by ſecrecy and art he either may, or at leaſt will expect to elude: they pretend to ſecure perſonal freedom, but ſubject all thoſe by whom they are adopted, to the tyranny of delegated power and official inſolence, to gibbets, impriſonment, and all the various ſpecies of ſocial puniſhment, upon the ſtrength of preſumptive or hired evidence. They pretend to the preſervation of our property, whilſt in reality they deprive us of the greateſt part of the produce of our toil and induſtry, under the ſpecious pretence of ſupporting that government by which we are oppreſſed, and which enables individuals to trample under foot the laws they have made, and oppreſs their ſubjects by that very wealth and power they have given for their preſervation. In ſhort I have long lived in a ſtate of nature, free from the burthen of civil ſociety, without ever feeling its want; and

from experience have been taught, that mankind, under ſpecious, but falſe pretences, have been cheated of the moſt valuable prerogatives of humanity; and been made to exchange native freedom and independence, for political tyranny, without one attendant advantage; and nothing could prevent this important truth from being univerſally diſcovered, but ignorance of a ſtate of nature, familiarity with the burthens of ſociety, and the having been taught from infancy, to conſider them as evils that muſt be ſubmitted to, for the ſake of avoiding thoſe dangers which are unjuſtly ſuppoſed to attend a ſtate of nature.—Let us now turn from thoſe ſpectacles where

"The ſuff'ring eye inverted nature ſees,"

towards the wilds of Guiana, where few veſtiges of human toil are ſeen, and few appearances of human art, but where every object teſtifies the care of nature over all her works; and retrograde from the

the refinement of civilization, to the ignorance of primitive man at the nipple of nature, impelled by appetite or fear, and directed by inſtinct; harmleſs becauſe content, and content becauſe void of comparative ideas; ſnatching the moment on the wing, without regard to the paſt, or ſolicitude for the future.

"The ſtate of nature was the reign of God;
Pride was not then, nor arts that pride to aid,
Man walk'd with beaſt, joint tenant of the ſhade;
The ſame his table, and the ſame his bed,
Nor murder cloath'd him, and no murder fed."

POPE.

From the ſimple evolutions of unaſſiſted nature, let us next trace his progreſſive advancement to that ſtate of natural ſociety which prevails among the Indians of Guiana: by what ſlow and imperceptible gradations muſt man have emerged from his primitive ignorance, and attained the knowledge of thoſe arts

and refinements which are the glory of civilized nations? What a lapſe of time, what a chaſm of ages, muſt have been required? Long as the continent of America muſt have been peopled, how little have the greateſt part of its original inhabitants advanced from their primitive ſtate? Aſſailed by diverſity of climate, ſoils, and ſeaſons, neceſſity has but imperfectly taught them the leſſon of reaſon; and reaſon has only employed art ſufficient to ſupply the ſimple neceſſaries of life; which in this happy climate are eaſily attained, from the profuſion of nature's ſpontaneous productions, and the perpetual abſence of winter, which renders cloathing and human providence unneceſſary. Here the inhabitants enjoy the undivided bleſſings of an extenſive and fruitful country, without oppoſition or envy, and free from thoſe unnatural wants, and artificial temptations to vice, which luxury has created; diſperſed through the foreſts in family-ſocieties,

ſtrangers

ſtrangers to political tyranny, free from the labyrinth of laws, and from the iniquities fabricated in their intricate receſſes; they preſerve that primitive equality which is the ſource of innocence, and ſupport of virtue: none are here debaſed to exalt others; none enjoy a profuſion of ſuperfluities, whilſt others ſtarve; none are cloathed in gold and gems, whilſt others, in penury and ſolitude want even rags to guard againſt the aſperities of an inclement winter. In ſhort, none here engroſs the bleſſings of nature, to the excluſion of others on whom they are equally entailed; nor are any oppreſſed by thoſe unnatural diſtinctions which inſult the majority in other ſocieties, but live in equality, freedom, and friendſhip; happy becauſe ignorant of artificial wants, and virtuous becauſe ſtrangers to unnatural temptations to evil; whilſt the paſſions, which in a ſtate of refinement are man's greateſt torment, in this happier condition are the vehicle of

augmented felicity *. Both ſexes, bred up in perfect innocence and purity, join promiſcuous in every ruſtic diverſion, unconſcious of a vicious thought; and having nothing to conceal, truth and candour dwell on their tongues; by this their native diſpoſitions are mutually and early known; and even in childhood a ſimilarity of temper and inclination inſpires them with friendſhip, which in maturer years is ripened to love; and as no obſtacles from ambition, intereſt, or diſparity of condition, ever exiſt among them, they are united agreeable to the laws of nature, which inſeperably connects, and perfectly ſecures their future happineſs.——I have ſaid that the

* Stop here, ye luxurious readers! Divert your attention for a moment from the ſatiating pleaſures of wealth and gaiety; and contemplate the preſent ſcenes of innocence and eaſe, where every zephyr breathes health, and every ſound is the echo of tranquility.

paſſions,

paſſions, which in a ſtate of civilization, are man's greateſt enemy, are here the ſource of felicity; let me illuſtrate this poſition, by the hiſtory of a man with whom I was once intimately acquainted. His parents had been able to afford him nothing but an education to procure his ſubſiſtence, and he was employed as clerk to a merchant in London. Notwithſtanding his want of fortune, nature had given him the ſame paſſions that ſhe has implanted in others to preſerve the ſpecies; and he was not inſenſible to their importunity, but could not gratify them by taking a wife, becauſe his want of property put it out of his power to ſupport a woman without fortune, and he knew of none elſe with whom he could expect ſucceſs; and having too much humanity to debauch the poor ſervile part of the ſex from chaſtity, and expoſe them to want and miſery, had it been practicable, he recurred to an intercourſe with proſtitutes, to gratify the deſires of nature;

but here his humanity again proved his enemy, and a ſenſe of the wretchedneſs of that proſtitution, by which they dearly earned the means of ſubſiſtence, made him more liberal in rewarding them, than perhaps others were who could no better ſupport the expence; by this the produce of his own induſtry was ſoon exhauſted, and at length he himſelf obliged to uſe ſome of the money entruſted with him by his employer, to procure ſuch things as were neceſſary for himſelf. This he expected to be able to refund, before it might be wanted; but it happened otherwiſe, and the ſhame of being detected in a breach of truſt of this kind, operated ſo powerfully on his mind, that he ſwallowed a large quantity of laudanum, from which he expired in the greateſt torment, contrary to his own, and the general belief of its procuring an eaſy death. Had this unfortunate man lived among the Indians of Guiana, he would have found no obſtacle

ſtacle to matrimony in want of fortune, becauſe every individual can amply ſupply the wants of his family by his own induſtry; and till he could have found an agreeable wife, he might have gratified his deſires with any unmarried woman, who would not afterwards have been leſs eſteemed for this indulgence. The caſe is ſimilar with regard to all other natural paſſions; the innovations of refinement oppoſe their indulgence; but in a ſtate of nature, there is no obſtacle to their gratification, and whoever would attempt to divert mankind from this ſtate, is an enemy to the human ſpecies; nor can his unnatural purpoſe be effected, without inducing ruin and diſorder.—Allow me now to make ſome obſervations on the inſtitution of property, which I really think an act of injuſtice, and cauſe of all ſocial evils. The bleſſings of nature are equally intailed on her children, and ſhould the people of one age aſſume a right of abrogating this

unabrogable intailment, and of dividing and unequally diſtributing the property of our common earth, and of thoſe bleſſings they are entitled to uſe, but not engroſs or alienate; can it be ſuppoſed that their poſterity are obliged to ſubmit to this arbitrary and unequal diviſion, and thereby give up a birthright which they have received from the bounty of nature only? The ſoil in every country ſhould be equally diſtributed among its inhabitants; ſuch a diſtribution was adopted at Rome, and was by no means found to diſcourage that frugality and induſtry for which the Romans were then celebrated. Or if every man was allowed to poſſeſs as much land as he could cultivate, and no more, the earth would be found ſufficiently extenſive for all its inhabitants. Nothing, however, ſhould be conſidered as a man's property, but the produce of his own labour; and this property, the fruit of his laudable induſtry, he ſhould be permitted

mitted to enjoy during the term of his own life, only without the power of transfering it to his deſcendants; becauſe the earth and its productions, without which his labour would have been uſeleſs, is equally the property of a thouſand others; and becauſe juſtice exempts the children from ſuffering for the crimes of their parents, and therefore cannot intitle them to benefits by the fruit of their induſtry, which ought to revert to the community: ſuch an enjoyment, during life, would afford a ſufficient incentive to providence and induſtry, though not to miſerly avarice; and would effectually ſecure civil ſocieties from that unequal diſtribution of wealth which ſwallows up all other diſtinctions: I ſay civil ſocieties, becauſe in natural ones, theſe regulations are unneceſſary; whilſt men are ſcattered over an undivided country, united only by the ties of parentage. It can never be of any great conſequence, what becomes of the ſmall exceſs in the fruits of their

induſtry, which may remain after their wants are ſatisfied; ſince a dangerous inequality never can exiſt, whilſt the land continues undivided; nor can that avaricious diſpoſition, which excites individuals to accumulate unneceſſary wealth, ever act with ſufficient force to overcome their natural indolence, 'till this diviſion of land inſpires new ideas of happineſs, and ſuperiority in objects which nature never deſigned for our purſuit: and what diſorder would not ariſe among the natives of Guiana, ſhould they once adopt the purſuit of thoſe unnatural objects, and ſeek for happineſs in ſuperior wealth and power? Inſtead of being ſatisfied with daily procuring a ſupply for the demands of nature, they would employ that leiſure, which is now happily ſpent in mirth, ſocial intercourſe, and ſalubrious diverſions, in painful endeavours to encreaſe their poſſeſſions, and defraud each other; and diſparity of force and talents, attended by riches, or

followed

followed by poverty, would ſoon produce an inequality among them, with all its miſchievous conſequences: their youth, inſtead of enjoying the bleſſings of a marriage, formed by love, would be diſappointed and made miſerable by the views of intereſt, which in other countries hinder the hands of myriads from being lawfully joined, whoſe hearts have been united by love. Perſonal merit would then ſubmit to the ſuperior attractions of rank and fortune; arts and ſciences would ariſe to ſtimulate our natural, and excite inordinate paſſions, by multiplying the modes of enjoyment: artificial wants, deſires, and temptations to vice, would ariſe, and to gratify theſe in the rich, would employ millions of wretched beings, who might otherwiſe have lived in eaſe and independence; opulent individuals would ſquander the bread of provinces, whilſt thouſands were ſtarving; and the gilded creſt of vice would glare with impunity above

the reach of juſtice, whilſt impoveriſhed wretches would ſuffer oppreſſion by thoſe laws that afford others protection.—— For my own part I eſteem my preſent ſecluſion from the refinement of civilization, as my greateſt happineſs, and thoſe accidents which drove me hither (and which I then conſidered as evils) as the moſt fortunate incidents of my life; and as often as I reflect on this ſubject, I cannot but exclaim with Zeno, "*Recte ſane agit fortuna que nos ad philoſophiam impellit.*" True philoſophy brings us back to nature, and in this it is ſometimes imitated by inſtinct. Had I continued in Great Britain, how conſiderable a part of my time, which is now ſpent in delightful contemplation, would have been employed either in ſitting under the hands of a barber, or in dreſſing, or in paying or receiving inſipid viſits of ceremony, or in diſcharging the various duties, which the laws of decorum and politeneſs impoſe? Which would

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ſubject me to the moſt painful ſpecies of ſervitude. In my preſent ſtate, I ſpeak as I think, and act as I like, which is the eſſence of human happineſs; I riſe with the ſun, inſtead of languiſhing on the bed of indolence, unable to ſleep, and unwilling to riſe, like the politer part of mankind, who have yet the temerity to complain of the ſhortneſs of life.

Lord of my time, my devious path I bend,
Through fringy woodland, or ſmooth ſhaven lawn;
Or penſive grove, or airy cliff aſcend,
And hail the ſcene, by nature's pencil drawn.
Through theſe ſoft ſhades, delighted let me ſtray,
While o'er my head, forgotten ſuns deſcend;
Through theſe dear vallies, bend my caſual way,
Till ſetting life, a total ſhade extend. SHENSTONE.

In this happy ſecluſion, I endeavour to do as *Lucan* ſays of Cato.

——————*Servare modum finemque tueri,*
Naturamque ſequi.—— Pharſal. Lib. ii.

I have

I have not, however, been able entirely to eradicate the force of habitude, acquired in the early part of life; I often feel within myſelf an appetite for animal food, but as often repreſs the guilty inclination, by conſidering that we can have no right to rob the beaſts of that exiſtence and thoſe bleſſings we have not beſtowed, to ſatiate our unnatural appetites with a guilty meal *. Our common creator, who "made beaſt in aid of man, and man of beaſt," deſigned all his creatures to ſhare, but none to engroſs, the bleſſings of nature; nor can he,

"Who ſees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero periſh, or a ſparrow fall,"

* The writer appears in a ſubſequent letter to be a deiſt; and this inſtance of his ſelf-denial may, doubtleſs, prove the reality of his diſbelief of revelation, which among thoſe who call themſelves free-thinkers, is often only a pretence.

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be pleaſed, when, to ſatisfy an unnatural appetite, we murder thoſe animals, whoſe ſatisfaction and complacency in life, and care and ſolicitude for its preſervation, proves it to be to them a vehicle of happineſs: and indeed nothing but extreme hunger, or the example of voracious beaſts, could have firſt ſuggeſted the horrid practice of feeding on the carcaſſes of animals, or what is worſe, of murdering them for their carcaſſes; nor could any thing but the influence of example, which can familiarize the moſt horrid abſurdities, have reconciled mankind to a cuſtom ſo repugnant to the ſenſations of unprejudiced humanity: and I now remember, that during my reſidence in London, notwithſtanding the force of habitude, I have often felt both pain and horror, at ſeeing a flock of innocent lambs driven to ſlaughter, or at ſeeing the carcaſſes of butchered animals that fill every London market; and I cannot forbear telling you, that I

feel

feel the delights of an approving conſcience, in being able, without falſhood, to ſay with the poet,

"No flocks that range the valley free,
To ſlaughter I condemn;
Taught by that Power that pities me,
I learn to pity them.
But from the mountain's graſſy ſide,
A guiltleſs feaſt I bring;
A ſcrip with herbs and fruits ſupply'd,
And water from the ſpring."

Indeed the Indians, among whom I reſide, eat fleſh; but I think with Pythagoras, that they are not philoſophers; they hunt it for ſubſiſtence, but never betray ſuch inhumanity, as like your European ſportſmen, to delight in the horrid diverſion of wantonly killing hares.——I have long been convinced, that the brute creation have languages that fully communicate their ideas, and theſe I am now endeavouring to learn;

in

in different ages there have been people who pretended to this knowledge, which certainly muſt be an agreeable acquiſition to man, by enlarging the circle of his ſocial intercourſe.—As a regard for the brute creation has induced me to abſtain from animal food, ſo a regard for myſelf, engages me to refrain from the uſe of all ſpirituous or fermented liquors, "which unnerve the limbs, and dull the noble mind;" but as ſome ſtimulant is neceſſary, eſpecially to thoſe who ſubſiſt on vegetables, in a country where the prevalence of warmth and moiſture debilitates the digeſtive organs, I have advantageouſly ſubſtituted red pepper, which, like all the Indians, I uſe in great quantities, to improve digeſtion. Here I have found, by happy experience, that no food is ſo ſweet as that produced by the labour of my hands; and from thoſe fruits, eſculent herbs, and farinaceous vegetables, which the bounty of nature, and my own induſtry

duſtry afford, I obtain a wholeſome diet, that ſatisfies my appetite, and repairs the expences of my ſtrength, and bodily operations: this was the food of mankind in primitive ages, before they were diverted from it by an unnatural appetite. In this ſtate, free from all wants, but the few which a moderate and pleaſing exerciſe of my ſtrength and underſtanding will agreeably ſupply *; and having no deſires incompatible with virtue, or unattainable by my own induſtry, I have no temptations to vice, nor apprehenſions for the continuance of my happineſs, which, depending only on myſelf, muſt remain permanent 'till the end of life, unaffected by the mutability of fortune.

Æquum mi animum ipſe parabo. HOR.

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* *Si ad naturam vives nunquam eris pauper; ſi ad opinionem, nunquam dives. Exiguum natura deſiderat; opinio immenſum.* Sen. Ep. 16.

Who

Who, in this ſituation, would repine at being deprived of thoſe pleaſures and that pomp, which the rich and great enjoy in civil ſociety ?

Tremendous pomp! where hate, diſtruſt, and fear,
In kindred boſoms ſolve the ſocial tye;
There not the parent's ſmile is half ſincere,
Nor void of art, the conſort's melting eye.
There with the friendly wiſh, the kindly flame,
No face is brighten'd, and no boſom beats;
Youth, manhood, age, avow one ſordid aim,
And e'en the beardleſs lip eſſays deceit.

You aſk me, "whether I can reſolve, for ever, to abandon a ſtate of civilization, and never again reviſit my native country?" Will a particular anſwer to this queſtion be neceſſary, after what I have already ſaid? A virtuous man, reſiding among a luxurious people, muſt live in a conſtant and fatiguing watchfulneſs, to prevent his ſuffering from, or being contaminated by the vices of others;

others; and his whole life muſt be an inceſſant warfare, in which, if he is victorious, he can but preſerve that innocence, which in retirement he might enjoy in peace. I cannot, therefore, better anſwer your queſtion, than by a ſentence from Juvenal:

Quid Romæ faciam? Mentiri neſcio. Sat. iii.
—"*Fumum et opes ſtrepitumque urbis;*"

Have for me no charms. Beſides, ſhould I again return to Great Britain, the unnatural inverſion of things, which univerſally prevails there, would neceſſarily deprive me of my preſent independence; and nothing can be more painful or humiliating to a generous mind, than ſubmitting to receive obligations, every one of which abridges the receiver in his natural freedom, and ſubjects him to impoſitions he cannot reſiſt, without expoſing himſelf to the charge of ingratitude: a life of independence is the ſource

of

of virtue; the ſoul unſhackled by the fetters of obligation, is fit for every generous flight of humanity and freedom. Supported by my own labour, without obligation to any *being*, but that from whom I received exiſtence, I here enjoy ſerenity, freedom, health, and competence; inſtead of that ſervile debaſement I ſhould feel, did I eat the bread of dependence, obtained by the fawning ſimper of ſucceſsful adulation. To give, would afford me pleaſure; but to receive, would fill me with ſhame.—It gives me no pain, therefore, to reſolve on never reviſiting my native country: a citizen of the world, I boaſt of no patriotiſm, which at beſt is but an extended ſelfiſhneſs. I conſider, that wherever the courſe of human events may lead me, I ſhall not find myſelf a ſtranger; I ſhall meet the ſame men and women, diſtinguiſhed by the ſame figure, endowed with the ſame faculties, and influenced by the ſame natural laws; I ſhall diſcover the

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ſame paſſions and purſuits, diverſified by the infinite variety of cuſtoms and laws, which conſtitute the diſtinctions among mankind in their different approaches to civilization and refinement; the ſame ſun and moon will continue to guide the year; the ſame azure expanſe, beſpangled with ſtars, will cover my head; and the ſame divine Providence will continue to preſerve and direct me: and whilſt I can here contemplate the ſtupendous aſſemblage of celeſtial orbs, diſpoſed in the immenſe ſpace of the univerſe, (thoſe innumerable ſuns whoſe beams enlighten and cheriſh the unknown worlds that revolve around them) ſhall I indulge an anxious attachment for that ſpeck of earth, the country whoſe air I firſt inſpired? ——Recovered from the prejudices of education, my only deſire is to enjoy the calm delights of an innocent, ſimple, temperate, retired, and contemplative life; unheeded by the world, and unaffected by publick commotions

motions or revolutions; and theſe deſires I have attained, and their fruition ſweetened by the joys of an approving conſcience, yield a portion of happineſs, which the greateſt monarch that ever the world with awe and admiration beheld, might juſtly envy.

Thus let me live, unſeen, unknown;
Thus unlamented let me die;
Steal from the world, and not a ſtone
Tell where I lie. POPE.

I hope the reaſons I have now aſſigned for my attachment to my preſent mode of life, will afford a ſatisfactory anſwer to your enquiries; and permit me now to aſſure you, that I ſhall with pleaſure improve every occaſion of evincing the truth with which I am,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

GORDON.

LETTER VI.

To the Rev. Mr. WENTWORTH.

ACCEPT, dear brother, my ſincere congratulations on your marriage with the amiable Miſs Conway; and may the happineſs, which you tell me it has already afforded, continue unimpaired till the period of your life.—I am coming to be a witneſs to your joys, and once more to ſhare the felicity of your affectionate converſation, after a painful abſence. Within three days from hence, I expect to embark in a ſhip bound for Holland; and perhaps my preſence may interrupt you in the reading of this. Already do I anticipate in idea the careſſes of an affectionate parent and brother, and of thoſe dear relations and friends to whom I am now returning:

there is in every one a natural attachment to that ſpot in which he firſt received exiſtence; and whatever changes he may experience in life, or wherever he may wander, ſtill his fatigued imagination recurs to home for tranquility, and expects repoſe only in the boſom of his country: and yet it is difficult for me to reflect on leaving a place where I have paſſed many happy days in calm retirement and contemplation; and of ſeparating from friends, whoſe affection I have experienced, and whoſe ſociety habitude has rendered neceſſary, without reluctance or regret. 'Tis this circumſtance that conſtitutes the infelicity of a change of reſidence. There are, indeed, ſome diſagreeable circumſtances that attend a life paſſed in this climate and country; but the ſame obſervation may be juſtly applied to every other: there are advantages and inconveniences in every ſituation, and it is the knowledge of this only, that can emancipate one part

of mankind from the prepoſſeſſions they entertain againſt the other; and this is perhaps the principal advantage acquired by travel, which by inſtructing us in men and manners, diſpoſes us to mutual toleration and general philanthropy: he who has never before quitted his native country, fancies every deviation from the cuſtoms to which he has been there habituated, a departure from decency and propriety; and falſely condemns thoſe of abſurdity, who chance to diſſent from a ſtandard originally founded in prejudice or partiality.—In my laſt, I ſent you two letters from Mr. Gordon; I have ſince received a third from him on the ſubject of religion, which I likewiſe incloſe for your peruſal, and which will diſcover him to be a deiſt from conviction: it is generally obſerved, with how much juſtice I will not determine, that thoſe who reject chriſtianity, are perſons whoſe lives are repugnant to the purity of its precepts, and whoſe actions inſpire

inſpire them with terror at the thought of a future retribution; and yet the inſtance of Mr. Gordon affords a direct contradiction to this obſervation, as the ſtricteſt probity and ſentimental virtue direct all his actions; nor does he appear to have any of that pride, which ſometimes engages a perſon to diſſent from a religion generally received, to prove the ſingularity or ſuperiority of his underſtanding: but he ſeems to doubt what he cannot underſtand, and his ſcepticiſm appears evidently to have had its origin in the too great auſterity in which he was educated, by which he conceived an averſion from the duties of religion; and perhaps this has been aſſiſted by the ſtudy of phyſick; as phyſicians have been frequently diſtinguiſhed for the extravagance of their religious notions; the errors ſo often diſcovered in medical and philoſophical hypotheſes, exciting in them a propenſity to ſuſpicion and ſcepticiſm.—Neceſſity and materialiſm, have been lately

adopted by men of profound erudition, and ſupported by very plauſible arguments; and if they are injurious to revealed religion, I wiſh that the teachers of it would leave their diſputes about the leſs important objections that are inceſſantly agitated among them; and convert their attention to refuting the arguments that ſeveral modern philoſophers have alledged, particularly againſt the free-agency of mankind. Mr. Gordon's ſentiments are ſuch, as every man that rejects divine revelation, and adopts only the principles of unaſſiſted reaſon, will naturally embrace; at leaſt if he reaſons juſtly from theſe principles: and yet they lead to a dangerous maze of doubt and anxiety, that every good man would wiſh to eſcape, as deſtructive to his hopes of a future reward to virtue, and even to the certainty of a future exiſtence. The virtuous, therefore, if they act prudently, will graſp at revelation as their only ſecurity for the bleſ-

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ſings of a future and better life. There are few, perhaps none, who will not acknowledge, that the belief of a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, is uſeful to mankind; from whence it naturally follows, either that this belief is juſt, or that the Deity has ſo formed our ſyſtem, that the happineſs of the firſt order of its inhabitants, depends on the belief of a lie.—To reconcile the freedom of our actions with preſcience, or defend the abſolute decrees of the Deity, without involving him in the turpitude of human actions, is beyond the capacity of human reaſon: happy, if convinced of her temerity, in attempting to diſcloſe myſteries that the Deity has invelloped with a veil, impenetrable to finite ſagacity; ſhe leaves a labirynth of doubt and uncertainty, and returns with becoming modeſty to her natural ſphere of action, the examination of common life, which alone will afford ſufficient employment.

As this is the laſt letter you will receive from me before my arrival, I cannot forbear telling you that I am not a little diſpleaſed with that ſilence you have long obſerved in your letters, with regard to the amiable—the loſt Sophia; though I thought it moſt expedient to impoſe a ſilence on myſelf, concerning the object of a hopeleſs paſſion, you certainly muſt have been better acquainted with human nature, than to believe I could be pleaſed with it in you; or did you think by this, to promote the cure of my fruitleſs paſſion? If you did, I am obliged by the goodneſs of your intentions, though they have been unſucceſsful. I am yet a lover, whom neither the wing of time, nor the paroxyſm of youth, has ever been able to eſtrange from the object of his paſſion. Nor can the ſuggeſtions of reaſon or deſpair, ever obliterate from my ſoul, thoſe impreſſions which the charms of Miſs Stanhope have made, and which will occupy

cupy my mind as long as memory or life are continued.

Of all afflictions taught a lover yet,
'Tis ſure the hardeſt ſcience to forget;
Unequal taſk, a paſſion to reſign,
For hearts ſo touch'd, ſo pierc'd, ſo loſt as mine.
POPE.

My paſſions are naturally violent, and they have been all tranſmuted into one; the predominant paſſion ſwallowing up the weaker, and thereby augmenting its own vigour; you will therefore be ſurprized to hear me declare, that if I muſt renounce all hope of ever poſſeſſing Miſs Stanhope, my happineſs will always be imperfect; and yet I cannot flatter myſelf with the hope of obtaining her, unleſs it be by vindicating my innocence of thoſe aggravated circumſtances of my folly, which were particularly offenſive to the purity of her virtue; and this, I fear, will be ever impoſſible. I cannot, how-

ever, but approve her conduct, though it ſhould for ever obſtruct my happineſs. I have for ſome time concealed my ſentiments on this ſubject, to avoid giving you that uneaſineſs which I know your concern for my happineſs would naturally occaſion. —— But the veſſel by which this muſt be conveyed is now ſailing; I can therefore only add, my hope of ſoon meeting the beſt of parents and brothers, with that rapture which now glows in my breaſt; and of indulging the tender ſuggeſtions of filial and fraternal affection, which will ever direct the conduct of,

DEAR BROTHER,

Your, &c.

Rio Demerary,
April 26, 1766.

CHARLES WENTWORTH.

From Mr. GORDON to Mr. CHARLES WENTWORTH.*

DEAR SIR,

YOUR conjectures relative to my religious ſentiments, are not erroneous; but why do you deſire me to explain the reaſons on which they are founded? Is it to confirm any doubts which you likewiſe may, poſſibly, have on this ſubject, or to gain an opportunity of exerciſing your own faculties, in converting me from thoſe opinions which, perhaps, you may conſider as erroneous? But whatever may be your deſign, I will candidly explain my religious ſyſtem, without the leaſt reſerve; fully perſuaded that the elevation, generoſity, and extenſion of your ſentiments, will not ſuffer a diminution in that eſteem you

* This is the letter mentioned (p. 98) to be incloſed.

have profeſſed to entertain for me, to ariſe from any diſagreement in our religious opinions. Of all ſpeculative errors, ſays Mr. Hume, thoſe which regard religion, are the moſt excuſeable; nor is the wiſdom of any perſon to be determined by the groſſneſs or refinement of their theological principles: the ſame good ſenſe which influences men in the ordinary occurrences of life, is not attended to in matters of religion, which are conſidered as placed above the cognizance of human reaſon; and wherever religious principles remain merely as *principles*, they can never be imputed as a fault. I cannot, therefore, but think that every ſociety that eſtabliſhes a religion, and attempts to controul the opinions of its members to a conformity thereto, forgets and departs from the end of its inſtitution; individuals did not diveſt themſelves from their natural independence, to ſubject their conſciences to the controul of others, in

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matters which depend on conviction, and are merely private or perſonal, and therefore ought to have no connection with government, as not being proper objects for the cognizance of political authority. Religion, in its native purity, is a voluntary tribute of gratitude and adoration to the deity, ſpontaneouſly ariſing in the mind by conſidering our dependance on him, and his goodneſs in our creation and preſervation; and is therefore widely different from an auſtere practice of the factitious ceremonies of publick worſhip, which have been invented and eſtabliſhed by human authority in different parts of the earth, and into which mankind have been either terrified by the fear of divine puniſhment, or bribed by the hopes of future reward. It is a misfortune that natural religion, and natural liberty, are no where to be found pure and unſophiſticated by political adulteration: no, not even in Guiana, where, though the liberties of the people are perfect, they

are ſubject to religious fears and reſtraints, which the craft of a few has impoſed: but in all political ſocieties, civil government derives ſupport from eccleſiaſtical, and artificial laws receive a ſanction from artificial revelations; and every ſtate that ſubmits to the former, will invariably have the latter impoſed upon it, of ſome ſpecies or other; and whenever this happens, all future enquiries after truth, that in any degree lead to a diſſent from the revelation ſo impoſed, will be prohibited; and religious knowledge propagated in a manner wholly inconſiſtent with the attainment of truth, in any other object of ſcience; every impartial enquiry on the moſt important of all ſubjects, will then be reſtrained by perſecution, racks, and holy fires; and religion, that gentle miſtreſs, which ſhould perſuade, not compel, will be perverted to the ſterneſt tyrant. No earthly power can, indeed, puniſh our ſecret thoughts; but the diſpleaſure

diſpleaſure of heaven, and the terrors of divine vengeance, which are inceſſantly denounced againſt all who doubt the orthodox points of chriſtianity, tend, as far as human power can extend, to fetter our thoughts, and enſlave our minds. It is a melancholy reflection for thoſe who profeſs themſelves chriſtians, that this deteſtable ſpirit of intolerance and perſecution, has never prevailed with ſuch infernal violence among thoſe of any other ſect; though nothing can be more repugnant to the mild and charitable doctrines of chriſtianity. Even the church of England, which of all others has betrayed the leaſt portion of this horrid zeal, appears by a late unhappy proof, not intirely diveſted from it *. Even the

* Mr. Gordon here, doubtleſs, alludes to the caſe of the late Peter Annet, who, a few years ſince, was ſentenced to impriſonment, pillory, and hard labour, even in the autumn of life, when his ſtrength was debilitated by old age, (and notwithſtanding

the fair diſcuſſion of popular prejudices, is diſcouraged from a preſumption, that though they might be found without any reaſonable ſupport, yet the diſcovery might produce dangerous conſequences: as if happineſs was not connected with the practice of virtue, and that with the knowledge of truth; or as if it

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withſtanding his private character had ever been truly amiable) for writing what was ſtiled a blaſphemous commentary on the five books of Moſes.—Without entering into the particular merits of his caſe, I cannot but obſerve, that as a chriſtian, I lament every inſtance of perſecution for canvaſſing the doctrines of chriſtianity. Truth, the more it is examined, the more evident it will appear; nor can it be an injury to a true religion, fairly to diſcuſs the evidences on which it is founded, and every attempt to oppoſe this diſcuſſion, eſpecially if it be made by eccleſiaſtics, is pernicious to the religion itſelf, as it betrays a diſtruſt of the ſufficiency of its evidences, and naturally raiſes in the mind a ſuſpicion of fraud and impoſition. It is to be hoped, therefore, that every one who wiſhes well to chriſtianity, will hereafter reſtrain that intemperate zeal that would preclude a fair examination of its proofs, leſt they ſerve the cauſe of infidelity.

could

could be neceſſary to human happineſs, that mankind ſhould believe falſities. Under theſe prejudices and embarraſments, reaſon, the natural governeſs of human faith and actions, is reduced to a ſervile ſtate, and perverted to the vile drudgery of defending principles, and confirming habits foreign to her ſuggeſtions; and even thoſe by whom ſhe is moſt indulged, limit her authority within maxims that accident, ignorance, or intereſt firſt ſuggeſted, and cuſtom afterwards confirmed; cuſtom, which (as my lord Bolingbroke declares) owes its origin to the paſſions and prejudices of ſome, and the deſigns of others; that ape of reaſon that uſurps her dominion, exerciſes her power, and is obeyed in her ſtead. Even in the cradle, ſhackles are formed to fetter the mind to an implicit faith, in certain poſitions which properly fall within the cognizance of reaſon, before the tender mind can exerciſe that reaſon; from hence ſuch oppoſite opinions

are formed of truth, which is univerſally the ſame, eſpecially when it concerns religion; and each party adheres to the opinion they have adopted with intollerant zeal; and theſe opinions, propagated by education and cuſtom, however repugnant to reaſon and to each other, are afterwards ſupported on the pretended authority of reaſon and revelation; though neither reaſon or revelation can poſſibly be on more than one ſide, and perhaps on neither. 'Tis from theſe cauſes that idolaters are bred in Tartary, mahometans in Turkey, papiſts in Italy, and proteſtants in Great Britain; every one from education and example, adopting the religion as he ſpeaks the language of his country: and this ſucceſſion of errors and prejudices, forms ſo conſiderable an impediment in the ſearch of truth, that even a philoſopher reaches the confines of the grave, before he can diveſt himſelf from the errors imbibed in youth; reſtore his mind to its priſtine or natural rectitude,

rectitude, and attain that knowledge of himſelf and the world in which he lives, that is neceſſary to enable him to act with propriety therein. Diſguſted therefore at the vaſſalage which cuſtom and authority create, I feel myſelf happy in this ſylvan retirement, and in exerciſing an opportunity indulged to ſo few by the courſe of human accidents, "of being and living with myſelf," in a ſtate of natural freedom and independence; and of contemplating the world and myſelf, through the medium of natural and uncorrupt reaſon, and of approving or rejecting on my own authority, what in youth I received on that of others: which I cannot but conſider as more eligible, than, like the greateſt part of mankind, to ſpend my whole life in the mazes and diſquiſitions of artificial religion, and artificial philoſophy, without ever aſſuring myſelf of the certainty of thoſe axioms, on which the mighty fabric is founded.

Let

Let us then with calmneſs, judgment, and penetration, ſearch for truth where alone it is to be found, within the confined limits of human underſtanding; which, imperfect as it is, is nevertheleſs the only clue which God has given, to guide our reſearches, and diſtinguiſh truth from error. It is this principle that ſhould become our oracle, and as often as it has been deliberately exerciſed, whatever may be the deciſion, it ſhould become the ſtandard of our belief; ſince, as my lord Bolingbroke juſtly obſerves, nothing can be more evident, than that he who in the ſearch of truth, follows that guide that was given to direct him to it, even if it leads him to error, will have a better *plea* whenever or wherever he may be called to account, than he who has reſigned himſelf either deliberately or inadvertently to any authority on earth. How illiberal and unreaſonable is it then for us

to

to hate another for a ſuppoſed error in his religious opinions? No man willingly embraces falſhood; all are equally ſolicitous; truth and (as we obſerve in the ordinary occurrences of life) they are impatient to know it, even though they expect it will render them unhappy; and if what appears a truth to one, does not impreſs itſelf on the ſentient faculties of another to enforce conviction, is he culpable for the difference of their conformation, or can he be ſuppoſed wilfully to reſiſt the truth? This is ſo far from being the caſe with mankind in general, that our readineſs to embrace what is offered for our belief, has created in us a propenſity to credulity, that is a ſource of error: and from hence Ariſtotle has juſtly obſerved, that *incredulity is the ſource of wiſdom*: a diſpoſition to ſcepticiſm is undoubtedly neceſſary, to free the mind from thoſe popular prejudices which it will naturally imbibe from education: the

the errors reſulting from credulity, are innumerable; thoſe from ſcepticiſm are few, perhaps none: and the academic ſceptiſt is in the true road to wiſdom: as for the Pyrrhoniſt, his doubts are in no danger of making any laſting impreſſion, as every day's acquaintance with life will prove their abſurdity. Scepticiſm, therefore, is always leſs dangerous, and more laudable than credulity.—If, in this letter, I ſometimes uſe the ſentiments and arguments of others, as far as they appear founded in reaſon and truth, without always particularly quoting their authors, I hope you will not impute it to any illiberal motive; and indeed I do not always remember to whom they belong, but after having adopted them, candidly pay to the owner the due honor *.

* "*Suus ex merito quemque tuetur honos.*"

If

If, after having been educated in the doctrines and practice of chriſtianity, if I have ſince either doubted or rejected them, you will naturally expect me to explain the reaſons by which I have been influenced in that reſpect, before I proceed to the ſyſtem of morals that I may have ſince adopted. In this, however, your expectation will be but imperfectly gratified; as I have no inclination to combat the religious opinions of others, but only to juſtify my own; much leſs am I diſpoſed to make converts from chriſtianity; being fully perſuaded that whatever may be the faith of any man, if he regulates his life and actions agreeable to it, they will be acceptable to his Creator.—With reſpect to revelation, I will freely own to you, whoſe mind is elevated above the influence of vulgar prejudices, that I perceive on one ſide, arguments in its favour that I cannot eaſily anſwer, and on the other I find obſtacles

obſtacles which are wholly inſuperable *. It abounds with contradictions which are inconſiſtent with truth, and with aſſertions that are repugnant to reaſon. And a very conſiderable part of it is ſo obſcure and unintelligible, that every commentator declares it has never been rightly underſtood or explained, before he himſelf undertook the taſk of elucidating its difficulties; and the next commentator to this declares, that this pretender has failed in his undertaking; and the ſame charge is brought againſt the laſt by all the ſucceeding: is not an

* The editor diſavows every thing that is here objected againſt chriſtianity.—Thoſe of his readers, who have embraced it from a rational conviction of its truth, will be in no danger of being miſled by thoſe objections; but thoſe who have founded their faith on the prejudices of education, or in other words, who are chriſtians only becauſe chriſtianity was the religion of their parents, will do well to paſs over the remainder of this letter.

unin-

unintelligible revelation, a contradiction in terms? Can any thing be revealed, that is not underſtood? Or can it be ſuppoſed that an unintelligible writing, was ever inſpired by God for the benefit of man? The arguments in favour of revelation, depend on the teſtimony of thoſe who might either deceive, or be deceived. But the objections againſt it are founded in nature; and the reaſon and aptitude of things, appear therefore moſt worthy of our dependance. I am, however, ſuſpended in doubt: I cannot believe, but I will never deny, what may poſſibly be true: yet when I ſurvey Egypt worſhiping a crocodile, China adoring the ſun, and Tartary an idol; when I reflect that the followers of Mahomet, conſider the alcoran as ſacred as chriſtians do the goſpel, whilſt the Jews reject both; and that all believe their own ſyſtem right, and accuſe the others of blind credulity; I cannot but lament their general deluſion, and conclude,

that

that the Deity has never made any particular revelation of his will, other than what the lights of reaſon and nature ſuggeſt. One only of all theſe ſyſtems can be right, whilſt all the reſt of mankind muſt have been involved in error. If a revelation was neceſſary to mankind, it muſt have been neceſſary for all, and conſequently univerſal; and it muſt have been as neceſſary at the beginning, as when the world had ſubſiſted four thouſand years; for I do not conſider the laws of Moſes, any other than a temporal inſtitution; a very learned biſhop having fully proved them to have no alluſion to any other than the preſent ſtate of exiſtence. The immortality of the ſoul, and a ſtate of future retribution, on which the whole of chriſtianity is founded, having never been intimated to mankind by any one who pretended to divine inſpiration, till after the birth of Chriſt. How the knowledge of them became neceſſary then, but not till

then,

then, and that the Jews, only for whom it appears to have been firſt deſigned, I cannot comprehend. I will not object to you the incomprehenſibility of the doctrines of a trinity, or of ſatisfaction, and incarnation; nor the implacable cruelty of eternal reprobation and predeſtination, againſt which human nature alone muſt rebel, and exclaim with Virgil, Dwells there ſuch anger in heavenly minds? Permit me, however, to make a ſummary review of the reaſonableneſs of divine revelation, as adopted by thoſe whom I need not name; and leſt you ſhould think ſome reflections too ſevere, which a regard for truth will oblige me to interpoſe, I deſire you will remember that the moſt unfavourable of theſe have been ſuggeſted by Mr. *Ramſay* *, who was

* See his Philoſophical Principles of natural and revealed Religion.

never ſuſpected of malevolence to chriſtianity.

Firſt then, a woman ſeduced by the temptations of Satan, and her natural curioſity, taſtes a fruit, capable of imparting wiſdom, and maintaining the health and vigour both of her body and mind; and afterwards, (as is uſual with the ſex) ſeduces her huſband to taſte it alſo: for this weakneſs of human nature, they are not only ejected from the joys of paradiſe, by a God whoſe principal attribute is goodneſs, but condemned with all their poſterity to temporal miſery, and the greater part to eternal damnation; though in reality they had no more participation in the guilt of this crime, than of thoſe of Nero or Domitian. Afterwards, in conſequence of this decree of predeſtination and reprobation, all the human ſpecies were by the Deity abandoned to ignorance

norance and idolatry in this life, and miſery in the future; except a certain people, who, for whimſical reaſons, were received into his immediate friendſhip and protection: that is, on account of their *progenitor*, with whom we are told the Deity was intimate, and accuſtomed to make himſelf viſible, to deliver the news of his wife's conception, and other important articles of intelligence; and he appears to have more eſpecially gained the favour of the Deity, by his readineſs to ſacrifice his only ſon, in obedience to an order that was repugnant not only to the dictates of reaſon and nature, but to the divine will itſelf; which being unalterable, he ought to have conſidered as a diabolical order. He was, however, ſtopped in its execution, by the Deity himſelf, who, wanting that preſcience, which he appears to have had on all other occaſions, had only intended it as a trial, whether he had ſufficient faith to commit a vile action. This choſen

people, appear likewiſe to have conciliated the divine favour by another of their progenitors, who was grandſon to the former, but a vile impoſtor and deceiver; not only to his father, but to his elder brother alſo, who was cheated out of his birth-right and his father's bleſſing by the younger, and condemned to ſerve him, by whom he had been thus injured, though the ſuffering brother was of a generous, noble diſpoſition; and afterwards affectionately forgave him, by whom he had been thus wronged, at a time when his life was in his power. However, for the ſake of this impoſtor and his grandfather, their poſterity (as we are told) were choſen for the favourite people of God, who raiſed them up a deliverer, that firſt proved his virtue and courage by murdering a man quarreling with one of his own countrymen; and then, by the direction of that God, who in *Sinai* afterwards commanded his people not to *ſteal*, he taught

taught them to rob their maſters of every thing they could either borrow or ſteal; and then eſcaped with them to the wilderneſs; the water of a ſea dividing, to make a paſſage for the robbers, but returning to drown their purſuers. This man afterwards became their law-giver, and inſtituted a ſyſtem of religious rites; (but ſo very ſimilar to thoſe of their former maſters, as to have been by all the ancients confounded with them;) among theſe, the moſt conſiderable related to that mercenary mode of expiating ſins, by the bribery of ſacrifices; conſiſting of ſuch oblations as would have been moſt agreeable to themſelves, and which they conſequently judged to be moſt pleaſing to the Deity; who again interpoſed in behalf of his favourite people, and drove out and deſtroyed all the neighbouring nations, to procure them an eſtabliſhment; but notwithſtanding his partiality in their favour, they appear to have been ungrateful, prefidious, and

rebellious; always diſpoſed to forſake the worſhip of that God by whom they were thus favoured, and adopt the Gods of the neighbouring people. After all mankind, except this choſen nation, had been kept in a ſtate of ignorance and reprobation four thouſand years, we are told that the Deity on a ſudden changed his diſpoſition, and took a fancy to the reſt of mankind, ſending his ſon and coequal in the godhead, into the world in a human form, to ſatisfy that ſevere vindictive juſtice, which could not pardon the weakneſs and curioſity of the firſt woman, by an atonement which even human juſtice could not have allowed; that is, by the death of an innocent individual, for the crimes of others: by him was delivered a new law, and a new faith, which muſt be believed by all who would attain ſalvation in a future ſtate: and yet but a ſmall part of mankind have ever heard of this law, or of this faith, and fewer have

have ever underſtood them; conſequently the greateſt part of our ſpecies muſt ſuffer eternal miſery, and the Deity will for ever delight in their torments and blaſphemies; though one fiat may convert, they will remain unconverted, becauſe the Deity will continue implacable; and all this we are to believe (however incredible) becauſe what is injuſtice and cruelty with men, may be divine mercy and juſtice.—How is the Deity diſhonoured? What caprice, partiality, and malevolence are annexed to his attributes? Imperfections repugnant to thoſe qualities we naturally aſcribe to men of ſenſe and virtue.—What blaſphemy is it, to aſcribe to the eternal nature as perfections, what would be deemed crimes amongſt men? Pagans contented themſelves with divinizing luſt, inceſt, and adultery; but is it not more horrid to divinize inexorable anger and injuſtice? You will doubtleſs acknowledge that a religion which exhibits ſo many improbabilities in a curſory review,

will require the ſtongeſt evidences to overcome them and enforce conviction: what then are the proofs that ſupport chriſtianity? Miracles! But a miracle implying a violation of the pre-eſtabliſhed laws of nature is by its own definition indemonſtrable to any man acquainted with the extent, number, and modification of theſe laws. The evidence for the reality of miracles muſt neceſſarily be leſs than the evidence of our ſenſes, ſince even with the firſt witneſs it could be no greater, and muſt be impaired in paſſing from him to others, through ſucceeding generations, and become leſs certain than the immediate teſtimony of our own ſenſes. But a weaker evidence can never deſtroy a ſtronger; and therefore a miracle ſuppoſing a violation of the laws of nature, be it ever ſo clearly believed, cannot conſiſtently with the rules of juſt reaſoning ever be believed; ſince experience, the conſtant uniform teſtimony of our ſenſes, demonſtrates an invariable adherence to the laws

of

of nature, in all the viſible effects obſervable in our material ſyſtem; nor it is credible that thoſe natural laws which are as immutable as they are eternal, ſhould ever have ſuffered a ſuſpenſion or violation: if at any time an extraordinary effect ſhould appear which cannot eaſily be explained; it ought nevertheleſs by all the rules of juſt reaſoning to be conſidered as proceeding from natural laws and natural cauſes; and in that caſe can be no miracle, nor alledged in ſupport of any religion. Accounts of miracles have indeed been always found in hiſtory, profane as well as ſacred; but the credibility of human teſtimony on which they depend, is neceſſarily affected by a variety of circumſtances: we naturally entertain doubts where the witneſſes contradict each other, or are few in number, or of ſuſpicious character; or when they have an intereſt in what they affirm, or deliver their evidence with heſitation, or too eager aſſeveration, or when the matter in queſtion

contradicts our own conſtant obſervation and experience, from which a mutual deſtruction of authority and belief ariſes.—Nothing being a miracle that ever reſults from the eſtabliſhed laws of nature, every miracle muſt contradict the authority of our invariable experience, which alone is a full and poſitive proof from matter of fact, againſt the exiſtence of any miracle, nor can it be rendered credible but by an oppoſite ſuperior proof; and no teſtimony can afford this proof, unleſs its fallacy would be more miraculous than the fact it tends to prove: but human teſtimony is expoſed to error in many ways and by a variety of means which do not affect our experience of the laws of nature, and can never be a ſufficient evidence to eſtabliſh the reality of any miracle. As the fallacy of mankind, with the ſecrecy and complication of their views and intereſts will always render their evidence inferior to the conſtant uniform experience of our own ſenſes; and wherever miracles are cited

to eſtabliſh a new religion, they on that very account become more ſuſpicious; becauſe when the ſpirit of religion and love of wonder are combined, there is an end of common ſenſe: a man under their influence may be an enthuſiaſt, and perſuade himſelf that he ſees what has no reality; or he may know his evidence to be falſe and yet perſevere in affirming it, to promote what he may believe a holy cauſe; or he may be influenced either by intereſt, or the vanity of founding a new ſect; his hearers likewiſe, who have generally a large portion of credulity and but little judgment, may, and uſually do renounce that little in matters of religion, which they ſuppoſe above the cognizance of human reaſon.——That ſome or all theſe cauſes may be and are preſent without a violation of the laws of nature, is by much more credible than that a miracle has exiſted. The numberleſs inſtances of forged miracles and ſupernatural events, which have in all ages ei-

ther been detected, or which by their abſurdity detect themſelves, ſufficiently prove the natural propenſity of mankind to believe things which appear marvellous, and ought to create a ſuſpicion againſt them. It is likewiſe worthy of obſervation, that miracles have ever had their origin, and firſt gained belief, among the ignorant and barbarous, who are always abſurdly credulous and ſuperſtitious; and if ever more civilized nations have been found to believe them, it has been on the authority of their ignorant aud barbarous anceſtors. The different and oppoſite religions of Rome, Siam, Turkey, and China, are all ſupported by pretended miracles; and as but one among them can be true, they ought to be conſidered as evidences deſtroying each other. What miracle can be better atteſted than that which Tacitus relates of Veſpaſian, or thoſe performed at the tomb of the abbè Paris, which have been atteſted with all the authority of which human evidence is capable,

capable, and yet few at this time believe one among them: but nothing more need be ſaid to prove that no teſtimony for any miracle ever amonnted even to probability, much leſs to a proof. 'Tis experience only that gives authority to human teſtimony, and the ſame experience aſſures us of the regularity of the laws of nature; but this experience does more; it teaches us that human teſtimony is often falſe, either through deception, or an intereſted deſire of propagating falſhood, to which the uniform evidence of our own ſenſes is not expoſed, and therefore no human teſtimony ever can eſtabliſh a miracle with ſufficient certainty to render it a reaſonable proof of a new religion.

I come now to the *free agency* of mankind, which alone can render them accountable beings, or make that future retribution, on which the whole of chriſtianity is founded, conſiſtent with our ideas of *juſtice*. This free agency is frequently

quently and poſitively denied both in the books of the Old and New Teſtament, which aſſert that the Deity governs the minuteſt of our actions, and particularly interpoſes even if "*a hair of our heads falls to the ground*" and that as often as "*there is evil in the city, it is the Lord that has done it.*" And yet the ſame ſcriptures make us accountable for our actions at a future judgment, when we are to be conſigned either to eternal happineſs or torment according to the goodneſs or turpitude of thoſe actions to which the Deity has compelled us. As theſe things are incompatible with all our ideas of juſtice, it neceſſarily follows either that one of theſe oppoſite poſitions muſt be untrue, or that what is *injuſtice* among men, is *juſtice* with the Deity. I will leave to you the taſk of drawing thoſe inferences that are deducible from this fact; whilſt I proceed to the ſubject of human free agency.——
It is an indiſputable truth, that the *firſt cauſe* only can be *free*; and that all ſucceeding

ceeding effects, whether proceeding immediately thereupon, or produced by the action of ſecondary cauſes put into action by the firſt, neceſſarily happen in the ſame determinate manner. Man is a link in the great chain of cauſes and effects reſulting from the firſt cauſe; and according as he is acted upon, his own actions neceſſarily reſpond; the ſame cauſe, *ceteris paribus* always, producing the ſame determinate effect. Man is naturally at reſt, and neither wills nor acts without a cauſe; his will is the immediate cauſe of his action, and this he can obey unleſs he is hindered by foreign or natural obſtacles. This however at beſt is but hypothetical liberty; becauſe the determinations of the will are neceſſarily governed by the judgment, and that is invariably regulated by the ideas that neceſſarily enter the mind through the medium of the ſenſes; they being paſſive in receiving all impreſſions that are made on them; which impreſſions are the *agents*, and ourſelves the *patients*.

tients. A man therefore cannot beſtow on himſelf either ſenſations or ideas, but derives them all, his pains, pleaſures, and being itſelf, from other cauſes; and as they invariably produce certain determinate effects on his will, it evidently follows that the mind in all circumſtances is neceſſarily compelled to determine juſt as it does, without any more freedom than belongs to the ball on a billiard table, that is put into motion by a foreign ſtroke, and proceeds in a ſtrait direction (from the place at which it was applied) and ſtrikes the ſecond ball whoſe motion neceſſarily reſponds to the impreſſion of the firſt, always in the ſame determinate manner; and on the conſtancy of theſe effects reſulting from antecedent cauſes, the whole art and knowledge of the game depends. The ſame may be ſaid of human life, where our experience of the effects reſulting from certain Cauſes enables us to form a judgment of the effect; which never would be the caſe if the will was free or

not

not acted upon in the ſame determinate manner, in the ſame circumſtances. Let me be a little more explicit: the influence of external circumſtances on the determinations of the will is too obvious to require any proofs; and as for the internal motives or paſſions, nothing can be eaſier than to demonſtrate that they are the gerents of the will, independent of reaſon; which, in a ſtrict ſenſe, is the judgment of truth and faſhood good or evil, and can never of itſelf become a motive to the will, but as it is connected with ſome paſſion: matters of fact alſo which neither excite deſire or averſion, being totally indifferent and therefore no motives to action. But reaſon in a popular ſenſe, as Mr. Hume juſtly obſerves, is a general and calm paſſion, which takes a diſtinct comprehenſive view of its object, and inclines the will by prudential and extenſive motives; but the objects which influence this *paſſion* are the motives commonly called *paſſions*, brought to a nearer connection with the will.

will. If any one is diſpoſed to reject this doctrine, and to conſider the will as producing the paſſions, rather than the paſſions creating the will, let him try if he can love a diſagreeable object, or be pleaſed at an injury: if he can indeed do this. it will prove his paſſions ſubject to his will, but cannot however prove the freedom of that will which muſt have ſome motive to action, and that motive whatever it may be, muſt neceſſarily produce the ſame determination, and invalidate all his pretenſions to free-agency. All our freedom conſiſts in obeying our wills; but we muſt neceſſarily will juſt as we do will, and in acting otherwiſe we ſhould act without cauſe, which would be abſurd: my freedom conſiſts in not committing a crime when my mind repreſents it either in ſo odious or dangerous a light that I chuſe rather to let it alone: but in thus declining a bad action, I am no more free than if I had committed it: in both caſes the laſt idea neceſſarily governs. Both

the

the faculties of the will, and of the underſtanding are paſſive; they never act but as they are acted upon, and are then neceſſarily compelled to reſpond in a determinate manner; and the impreſſions to which they reſpond are the inſtruments of *neceſſity* and leave the mind neither freedom nor choice. In reality our pretentions to free-agency are highly abſurd: ſhall the whole univerſe obey the eternal laws of nature, and ſhall man be exempted from their government and allowed to act agreeable to his own caprice? To be free, he muſt have been his own *creator*: nothing being free but the *firſt cauſe*; all ſubſequent effects reſulting from *neceſſity*. Like the ſtars and elements we are directed by the eternal Being, that operates every thing in us, the ſmall wheels of that immenſe machine of which he is the ſoul, and which he governs by general, immutable, and eternal laws, that are invariably obſerved, without the leaſt exception, through the immenſe expanſe of univerſal matter;

matter; laws which, by the wiſdom of their contrivance, are capable of maintaining every part of the univerſal ſyſtem in its primitive perfection during the term of its duration, without any particular intervention of divine providence, or any ſuſpenſion of their own action, and their author by the immenſe comprehenſibility of his wiſdom, at firſt graſped, deſigned, and approved, all the various ſucceſſive events which would conſequentially reſult from the great chain of cauſes and effects; and therefore he foreſaw and intended all the reſolves and actions of animal beings. It would be abſurd to ſuppoſe the Creator of the univerſe ignorant of the effects that reſult from his works; and yet it is impoſſible to conceive that the Deity could foreſee conſequences depending on the determination of free-agents. That which never happened does not exiſt, and therefore cannot be known; *nothing* having neither properties nor accidents, muſt be imperceptible: but by ſuppoſing the

Deity

Deity to will, and predeſtine all the actions and events that happen in the univerſal ſyſtem of things, his *preſcience* will be no longer *improbable* or *unintelligible*.—Whoever takes a retroſpect of his paſt life, will find matter of ſurprize in reflecting on the chain of trivial and apparently accidental circumſtances, from which the whole conduct of his life has depended; and which on a minute examination will be found to have been of ſo much importance, that had any of them failed, he would naturally have been caſt into a very different ſphere of action. Thus, (without inſtancing a multitude of inferior circumſtances) had I not commenced an acquaintance with an unfortunate girl in Scotland, and had it not produced a conception, antecedent to the formalities which civil or religious policy has ordained, and had not irregularity been ſubjected to the cognizance of the kirk, I had perhaps never ſeen London: after my arrival there, had not accident brought me acquainted with Miſs Ruſſel,

Ruſſel, and Miſs Ruſſel with the dancing maſter, and had not the villiany and ingratitude of one whom I endeavoured to ſerve afterwards thrown me into difficulties, which co-operating with my diſappointment from Miſs Ruſſel, made it neceſſary for me to leave England, I had never viſited America; and had not an apparent accident induced me to ſail for Barbadoes, rather than any other part of the Weſt Indies, and had not other inducements before engaged ſeveral gentlemen there to form ſettlements in Demerary, I ſhould never have viſited Guiana, but have fallen into a different ſituation or ſphere of life, and probably have continued in ſervitude under the yoke of luxury and civilization: and an infinitude of remoter cauſes were neceſſary to produce thoſe accidents by which I was more immediately directed hither. The caſe is the ſame with every individual whoſe ſituation in life is the effect of an extenſive combination of other cauſes, all comprehended

hended in the great chain that extends from the primary cauſe to laſt effect, and which have all been neceſſary in promoting the rectitude and order of the univerſal ſyſtem: and to conſider this immenſe variety of events which thus concur to produce the harmony of the moral world, as the effect of man's capricious free-agency would be as abſurd as to attribute the order and regularity of the univerſe to a fortuitous concourſe of atoms.

Whoever contemplates the ſprings of human actions, will eaſily diſcover that mankind are virtuous or vicious either from the different confirmation of their ſentient or ſenſible ſyſtems, or the impreſſion of external circumſtances, to whoſe action they are neceſſarily ſubjected; and that every individual of the human ſpecies, with the ſame native diſpoſition, improved or vitiated in the ſame degree by education, and in the ſame ſituation, with the ſame incitements either to virtue or vice, would

would all conduct themselves in a similar manner. "The judge who condemns the poor man for being a thief, had been a thief himself had he been poor."* Where then can be the justice of those discriminations that have been introduced among mankind.——In demonstrating that man has no just claim to free-agency we do but prove what the scriptures of the Old and New Testament have repeatedly asserted; but we annihilate the utility, and consequently the probability, of a future retribution; and justify the Deity from the impious charge of neglecting to distribute justice in this world, by proving that we are all equally meritorious. Since those who positively suffer the action of those natural and accidental impressions which determine their conduct, are no more affected in point of merit by the goodness or turpitude of their actions, than

* Milwood in George Barnwell.

a plant

a plant is by the poiſonous or ſalubrious qualities that were beſtowed on it in its formation. From hence it unqueſtionably appears that either our actions have no moral turpitude, or that it is chargeable on our Creator; as the latter concluſion would be derogatory to the honour of the Deity, nobody will heſitate a moment in adopting the former, and concluding with Pope, that

"Reſpecting man, whatever wrong we call,
May, muſt be right, as relative to all."

You will perhaps aſk me then, Whether thoſe diſtinctions between virtue and vice, or good and evil, which have been ſuppoſed to be natural and eternal, do not really exiſt? To this I anſwer, that all things which happens being convenient for effecting the purpoſes of the Deity, are equally good: but certain objects, actions, or circumſtances, producing either pleaſure or pain to mankind, have been by us deno-

minated good or evil, though in themſelves they are wholly indifferent. The opinions of mankind in different parts of the world, concerning virtue and vice have been different, becauſe the ſame things from a difference of circumſtances, do not always produce the ſame effect. There are ſome things which are univerſally beneficial or pernicious to all nations, and of theſe their opinions have always been the ſame. Mr. Hume has fully demonſtrated, that all the ideas which mankind have entertained of moral virtues and vices in the different parts of the earth, have been founded in the good or evil conſequences ariſing from them either to individuals or the public, and not in any good or evil qualities naturally inherent in them; from whence it will be evident that though the difference between pleaſure and pain in the human ſpecies, may incline us to approve thoſe things which excite the former, and reject thoſe which produce the latter; and to denominate the one good and the other evil, yet this diſtinction between

tween them exiſts only with regard to ourſelves, and has no relation to the reſt of the univerſe; they being all equally ſubſervient to the divine purpoſe, which influenced our creation. As to human actions they are all derived from two principles; love of ſelf and love of others; the former aims at our own advantage, the latter at the good of others. The firſt therefore is ſelf-intereſt, the latter virtue. All the virtue or vice then, of which human actions are capable, are independant of the will and ſuch as the paſſions produce antecedent to it; becauſe, as has been before proved, the will is produced by the paſſions. From all this it will be evident that things in themſelves are neither virtuous nor vicious, but only ſo by their accidental, pernicious, or beneficial conſequences. But as they produce no ſuch effects on the other parts of the creation, therefore neither turpitude nor virtue are qualities inherent in them, but only accidents when applied to ourſelves, which by no means hinder their concur-

rence in promoting the good of the whole: Pope therefore has juſtly adviſed us to

" Account for moral as for natural things:
Why charge we heaven in theſe in thoſe acquit?
In both to reaſon right, is to ſubmit."

The diſtinctions between virtue and vice when the objects are removed from ourſelves appears, when conſidered in this manner, to be wholly chimerical; and thoſe actions which ſeem prejudicial, like vegetables whoſe qualities are apparently noxious to ourſelves, equally contribute to the perfection of our moral and natural ſyſtems. This is conſonant to the doctrine of Plato: 'The Being (ſays he) 'who preſides over the whole has diſpoſ-'ed and complicated all things for the 'happineſs and virtue of the whole, every 'part of which according to the extent of 'its influence does and ſuffers what is fit 'and proper: one of theſe parts belongs 'to every individual who is in the mean 'time

'time ignorant of the very end for which
'all particular natures are brought in-
'to exiſtence, that the all comprehending
'nature of the whole may be perfect and
'happy; exiſting as it does, not for your
'ſake, but for the cauſe and reaſon of
'your exiſtence; which, as in the ſymme-
'try of every artificial work, muſt of ne-
'ceſſity concur with the general deſign of
'the artiſt, and be ſubſervient to the whole
'of which it is a part.—The governing
'intelligence clearly beholding all the ac-
'tions of animated and ſelf-moving crea-
'tures, and that mixture of good and evil
'by which they are diverſified, conſider-
'ed previouſly by what diſpoſition of
'things, and by what ſituation of each in-
'dividual in the general ſyſtem, vice
'might be depreſſed and ſubdued, and
'virtue made ſecure of victory and hap-
'pineſs, with the greateſt facility and in
'the higheſt poſſible degree; hence he
'ordered through the intire circle of be-

'ing the internal conſtitution of every 'mind; where ſhould be its ſtation in 'the univerſal fabric, and through what 'variety of circumſtances it ſhould pro-'ceed in the whole tenor of its exiſt-'ence.' De Leg. x. 16.—The philoſophy contained in this quotation is in general true; but by what Plato ſays of virtue and vice, he appears in thoſe particulars to have been influenced by popular prejudices, and not to have reaſoned on his own principles a ſufficient length; becauſe if they had been purſued he would have diſcovered all "*partial evil*" to be "*univerſal good*," and conſequently whatever might have been the purpoſe which influenced the Deity in that univerſal predeſtination of which he was juſtly convinced, it was not the depreſſion of vice or promotion of virtue.—But though it be eaſy to prove that evil does not exiſt in objects themſelves, but is an accident ariſing from the particular mode of their application

application to our ſenſes; yet it will be difficult to reconcile mankind to the action of partial or accidental evil, which we ſuffer with impatience, and conſider as an imperfection, in the œconomy of our materal ſyſtem.

" Better for us, perhaps, it might appear,
Were there all harmony, all virtue here;
That never air or ocean felt the wind,
That never paſſion diſcompoſed the mind;
But ALL ſubſiſts by elemental ſtrife,
And paſſions are the elements of life.
The general order, ſince the whole began,
Is kept in nature, and is kept in man." POPE.

It may be difficult to underſtand why we could not have been placed in a ſtate perfectly happy, without ever ſuffering either pain, want, or diſeaſe; and yet happineſs and miſery are but relatives, or comparative ideas; and without the knowledge of one we could not comprehend

the other. But ſuppoſe a world never diverſified by thoſe variations which we denominate good or evil, that would be another world and the chain of events would then be directed by another ſpecies of wiſdom. The Great Eternal *Cauſe* has created an infinite number of worlds, all, perhaps, varying from each other, and their immenſe variety is an attribute of Omnipotence.

He who through vaſt immenſity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compoſe one univerſe;
Obſerve how ſyſtem into ſyſtem runs,
What other planets circle other ſuns;
What varied Being peoples every ſtar,
May tell why Heaven has made us we are."

POPE.

The ſubject is beyond the extent of our finite comprehenſion:

" 'Tis but a part we ſee, and not a whole."

All

All created beings have received exiſtence for ſome important purpoſe, worthy of their wiſe and benevolent Creator; but as we are but feeble inſtruments in its execution, it is above the comprehenſion of our imperfect ſenſes. But, of all others, the *probationary* deſign which has been ſuppoſed to have influenced our creation, appears to me to be the leaſt probable or adequate to the idea which I have conceived of the Divine Wiſdom and Preſcience. Without making the experiment, the Deity might, doubtleſs, know that if he created us with qualities requiſite to produce thoſe actions which we denominate virtuous, they would certainly happen; *& vice verſa.*

If then we are not here placed in a ſtate of probation, you will naturally enqnire whether the ſoul be immortal? This, however, is a ſubject which our Creator has invelloped with a veil impenetrable

to our ſenſes. All the knowledge we can poſſibly have either of ourſelves, or the world in which we live, muſt be derived from experience. But our experience does not extend beyond the grave, from which no traveller has ever returned. All, therefore, that we know is, that our bodies, after death, are either eaten by other animals and with them again animated; or, that they corrupt, and repaying to their parent earth that ſubſtance they have received from her, nouriſh, and become parts of other productions in the animal and vegetable ſyſtems. Whoever would extend his enquiries farther on this ſubject, muſt be content with conjectures: if mine can afford you any ſatisfaction, I ſhall be pleaſed.—The ſubſtance of the ſoul has never been diſcovered, or brought under examination of our ſenſes. It is only by its accidents that we are aſſured of its exiſtence; but theſe accidents do not enable us to aſcertain

tain the term of its exiſtence. We know, however, that all its operations neceſſarily depend on bodily organs, and as often as their ſoundneſs and integrity are impaired, its functions become imperfect; and that it changes annually with the body, participating the joys and ſorrows of alternate health and diſeaſe *. The animal machine, therefore, is compoſed of a ſentient, ſenſible, and a moving ſyſtem: by the different modes of union between the two latter, the varieties of temperament and conſtitution are produced; and from the ſame difference of union between the former, the different mental diſpoſitions and capacities ariſe. 'Tis from hence that children in early in-

* The ſubject is ſerious; but I cannot avoid ſubjoining a paſſage from the humorous author of Triſtram Shandy. "A man's body and his mind, with reverence to both I ſpeak it, are exactly like a *jerkin* and a jerkin's lining.—Rumple the one—you rumple the other."

fancy diſcover greater or leſs propenſities to courage or cowardice, frowardneſs or patience, benignity or malevolence, pride or humility, &c. nor does this inequality in our natural endowments reflect on the juſtice of the Deity, who ſeems to have formed a regular gradation, not only in the different orders, but in the ſame ſpecies of beings. Want of judgment, as in idiotiſm, and the falſe arrangement of ideas, as in madneſs, with all gradations between ſagacity and folly, are produced by imperfections in the modes of union between the ſentient and ſenſible ſyſtems; and all theſe effects likewiſe reſult from bodily diſeaſes, and are again frequently removed by the application of material remedies. By this, the intimate union and mutual dependence of the ſeveral ſyſtems on each other is evident, and affords the preſumption that their ſeveral ſubſtances are ſimilar. The moving and ſenſible ſyſtems we know to

be

be material, and may conclude the ſentient ſyſtem to be material alſo. Matter and ſpirit (if by ſpirit is meant immateriality) are ſo oppoſite to each other, that nothing leſs than the Almighty Mind can form an idea of an union between them, and we know (if we know any thing) that they cannot act on each other. The materiality of the ſoul, however, is no proof againſt its immortality; matter being indeſtructible, and it being poſſible that the Deity himſelf may be material; as matter is capable of almoſt infinite ſubtility, ſo as to pervade all ſenſible objects, and eſcape all our ſenſes. Thoſe who have denied matter the ſuſceptibility of thought, have impiouſly ſet bounds to the power of omnipotence. If the faculty of thought be not inherent in matter, it muſt have been beſtowed on us; and our Creator might beſtow it on one object with the ſame facility as on another;

as

as eaſily on our miniſterial organs, as on a ſpark of elementary fire (if by that expreſſion, or any other, we can comprehend an immaterial being.) But without detaining you longer on this ſubject, let me obſerve that as the ſoundneſs and integrity of material organs, are neceſſary to all the operations of the ſoul, when it is disjoined from theſe, it muſt neceſſarily continue in a ſtate of inaction, at leaſt during its ſeparation. Whether the ſentient principle ſuffers in that corruption, by which the ſenſible and moving organs are diſſolved, or whether it is exempt from this mortality, and again united to other bodies, as they are ſucceſſively produced by reſurrection, I cannot with certainty determine. Reſurrection is perhaps the moſt frequent operation of nature; every thing in the world being the effect of reſurrection. Caterpillars are regenerated into butterflies, acorns regenerate

oaks,

oaks, the carcaſſes of animals regenerate worms, &c. matter is continually varying the mode of its exiſtence, and inceſſantly aſſuming new forms. Thoſe particles which formerly compoſed my body, have been diſperſed in air, or mixed with earth; and from thence have been reſumed for the nouriſhment of vegetables, which have ſince been eaten by animals, and from them again diſperſed; and perhaps at this inſtant they compoſe a part in the bodies of thouſands of other animals. This invariably happens throughout the whole extent of our material ſyſtem; and can it then be ſuppoſed that any individual in any future ſtate of exiſtence, will ever again reſume all thoſe widely diſperſed particles, which in this ſtate have compoſed his body? Perhaps the ſubſtance of which the preſent animal ſyſtem is compoſed, has belonged to thoſe men who formed the armies of Xerxes and

Alex-

Alexander, and to millions who exiſted before and ſince thoſe periods; and by whom of all theſe can it then be claimed? Every particle of my own body, doubtleſs, has been, and will hereafter be, often animated in different forms, but not conjointly, 'till time ſhall be no more; but that ſame ſubſtance of which its ſentient, ſenſible, and moving ſyſtems are now compoſed, will be again all united in another being, is incredible. Whoever contemplates the uniform operations of nature, will find that the whole world is in a conſtant progreſſive change, and by the different forms it aſſumes, compoſes the foſſil, the vegetable, and animal ſyſtems. The tree after having for a time enjoyed life, falls to the earth, and repays that nouriſhment which is neceſſary to its growth, and thereby ſupplies the means of ſupport to the riſing plants: the animal world ſuffers the ſame fate:

" All forms that periſh, other forms ſupply;
(By turns we catch the vital breath and die:)
Like bubbles on the ſea of matter born,
They riſe, they break, and to that ſea return."

POPE.

But I would hope that the ſentient principle is exempt from this natural corruption, and after its preſent ſeparation, again reanimates other bodies. Perhaps

——————— " His parent hand,
From the mute ſhell-fiſh gaſping on the ſhore,
To men, to angels, to celeſtial minds,
For ever leads the generations on,
To higher ſcenes of being; while ſupplyed,
From day to day by his enlivening breath,
Inferior orders in ſucceſſion riſe,
To fill the void below." AKENSIDE.

It is, however, ſufficiently apparent, that our belief of a re-union of the ſame particles

particles of matter, in the ſame mode of exiſtence, at a future general reſurrection, is but the chimerical ſuggeſtion of an inflamed fancy; a ſuggeſtion unſupported by one probability, and repugnant to reaſon and all analagous inferences from other objects. If either reaſon or ſelf-love perſuade to inveſt the ſouls of mankind with immortality, let us alſo extend it to thoſe of beaſts, who have perception and memory, and alſo combine ideas, and diſplay every other mark of reaſon (though it may be leſs perfect than our own:) if by thought we infer the exiſtence of a ſoul in man, why ſhould we not make the ſame inference from the thoughts of an elephant or horſe; and if we believe our own ſouls immortal, why not believe thoſe of other animals immortal likewiſe. I know that theſe reflections are not pleaſing to the pride and arrogance of mankind, who are ever diſpoſed to

expatiate

expatiate in praiſe of their own nature; and its dignity is ever the fond theme of humanity. Thus beings, wiſer indeed than the monkey, and more active than the oyſter, but mere tenants of an atom, have fooliſhly imagined that the creation of the immenſe univerſe, had their emolument chiefly in view; and quitting their original ſtation in the creation, have arrogated to themſelves the lordſhip of all below; preſuming that not only this globe, but the ſun, the moon, and the innumerable orbs that occupy the vaſt expanſe of ſpace, were deſigned for his uſe. But alas! how inadequate is impotent man, the inſect of a day, to this immenſe proviſion. By conſidering that our little globe revolves with others round the ſun, and that the conſtant uniform motions of all the celeſtial orbs, may eternally ſubſiſt without our aid; and that even in our earth the human ſpecies make but an incon-

inconſiderable part of thoſe animals who are its inhabitants, and the joint heirs of its bleſſings, we ſhall naturally diveſt ourſelves of this unreaſonable prejudice. I would not indeed attempt to depreſs theſe elevated notions of human dignity, was I not perſuaded that they tend to promote diſorder (if any thing can) in the ſyſtem of things. But after all, I do not conſider the immortality of the ſoul as a ſubject in which we are really concerned; had it been neceſſary to mankind, it would not have been left in ſuch uncertainty by the author of our beings, who cannot be ſuppoſed to have concealed any truth neceſſary for his creatures. I know there are thoſe who conſider every doubt of the ſoul's immortality, as pernicious to the morals of mankind: but of this I am in no degree convinced. The knowledge of a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments, was not thought neceſſary to the

Jews

Jews under the Moſaic law; and was rather hoped than believed by all mankind, but eſpecially the vulgar (who have moſt need of moral reſtraints) until the promulgation of chriſtianity; and yet we do not find they were more vicious than in modern ages: even in our days we have known a Spinoza, in effect an atheiſt, and a Hobbes whoſe ſentiments confounded the ſuppoſed diſtinctions of natural good and evil, whoſe actions were notwithſtanding irreproachable: and I fear that the lives and actions of thoſe who glory in chriſtianity, if judged by the rule of impartial juſtice, would not be found to have more virtue than thoſe of nations who have fewer reſtraints from vice; and even the poor remains of their morality, are preſerved not by divine, but human laws; not by the dread of future, but of preſent puniſhment. Do we not every day ſee crimes, which neither virtue

tue nor religion have been able to prevent, multiplied and aggravated to hinder their detection, and avoid diſgrace or temporal puniſhment? What other motive is it that adds murder to robbery, or converts a timid girl into the murderess of the untimely fruit of her womb? Nor is that motive, which thus becomes the ſource of accumulated crimes, reſtrained by chriſtianity, becauſe its doctrines promiſe an expiation for a whole life of guilt, by a momentary repentance.

There may likewiſe be ſome who will conſider the doctrine of neceſſity, and that of the indifference of actions and events, with regard to virtue and vice, as injurious to morality; if, however, it be proved that we really act from neceſſity, the knowledge of it can never be pernicious, becauſe we ſhall never be permitted to counteract the purpoſes

of

of the Deity; and as for the diſtinction between virtue and vice, its influence on our mind will neither be augmented or impaired, whether we conſider it as natural or accidental. As long as we can feel the difference between pleaſure and pain, ſo long we ſhall cheriſh thoſe things which produce the former, and reject thoſe which excite the latter; that is, we ſhall approve virtue, and deteſt vice. But our approbation of the one, and deteſtation of the other, will be founded in thoſe paſſions which produce the will, and conſequently they will continue to be inſtruments of that neceſſity by which we are governed.—We ſhall therefore have the ſame motives to love the good and abhor the bad among our own ſpecies, as we have to cultivate thoſe plants which are wholeſome or uſeful, and deſtroy thoſe which are noxious or uſeleſs; though ſenſible that the former having been paſſive in receiving their good

good qualities, do not in reality merit more than the latter. And we ſhall ſoon find by experience, that our apprehenſions of evils that may reſult from a belief of the doctrines of neceſſity, materialiſm, &c. are as groundleſs as our ideas of thoſe diſorders and acts of violence, which we unreaſonably ſuppoſe would prevail without political ſociety; and which have induced deluded nations to purchaſe imaginary peace at the expence of real happineſs. In both caſes we have departed from nature, whoſe providential care is abundantly ſufficient for all her creatures.—Thus I have with as much brevity as I am able, anſwered your enquiries concerning my religious ſentiments: and permit me to tell you, that in forming them, I have ſuffered my reaſon to proceed wherever it was inclined, without any regard to conſequences, or any reſtraints from cuſtom or prejudice; always conſidering it as abſurd, to ſuppreſs our enquiries after truth,

truth, from a fear of their prejudice to religion; as I ſhould naturally diſtruſt any religion that is liable to be injured by the diſcovery of truth. Should my reaſon have erred, I ſhall not fear the conſequences, being conſcious to myſelf that I have aimed at the knowledge of truth, as much as my imperfect faculties would permit: and as I conſtantly adore the wiſdom and power of the Deity, and feel myſelf grateful for his goodneſs; and as I live by my own labour, and the bounties of nature, without injuring any creature, whether human or brutal, but on the contrary rendering to every one all the ſervices in my power, I can without fear or concern reſign myſelf to the allotments of futurity:

"Safe in the hand of one diſpoſing power,
Or in the natal or the mortal hour." - POPE.

—To reconcile free-agency with preſcience, or defend the abſolute decrees of

the Deity, without involving him in the turpitude of human actions, has hitherto been found impoſſible; theſe difficulties, however, do not exiſt in the ſyſtem that I have adopted, which to me appears the moſt reaſonable, and is of all others the beſt calculated to juſtify the Deity,

"And vindicate the ways of God to man."

You inform me of your intention ſoon to reviſit your country and friends: I ſincerely wiſh you a proſperous voyage, and a greater portion of happineſs than I ſhould expect to enjoy in civilized ſociety; and permit me to aſſure you, that I ſhall always cheriſh your remembrance, and to evince the eſteem that I have really conceived for you, I will endeavour to overcome the reluctance I feel at the thought even of ſeeing thoſe ſpectacles of inverted nature, which ſocial art and refinement always create, and viſit you before your departure.

Should

Should you, by any unexpected accident, leave the colony before my arrival; *perge modo, et qua te ducit via dirige greſſum.*" This, after knowing my ſentiments of neceſſity, is all the advice you will expect from

Your moſt affectionate

and devoted friend,

JAMES GORDON.

LETTER VIII.

Miſs STANHOPE to Mrs. WENTWORTH.

YOU will, doubtleſs, be agreeably ſurprized, my dear Louiſa, (for ſo I muſt continue to call you) at hearing that Miſs Jackſon's imputations on the character of Mr. Charles Wentworth, were unjuſt, and that I formerly treated him with unmerited ſeverity. This, however, is true, as I am aſſured by a long letter from that unfortunate woman, which is juſt come to hand: but as the ſtile and orthography, in which it is wrote, are very incorrect, I chuſe rather to give you an account of its contents, than be at the trouble of copying it for your peruſal. —— This letter contains a hiſtory of her life to the preſent time, from which it appears

that

that ſhe was educated under the care of her mother, 'till the age of fourteen, who inſtead of ſtoring her mind with uſeful inſtruction, ſowed it with the ſeeds of vanity; encouraging her to believe that ſhe poſſeſſed an uncommon ſhare of beauty, and that it could not fail in procuring her an opulent huſband, to ſupport her in all the extravagances of dreſs and gaiety, which ſhe was taught to conſider as the ſummit of human felicity; whilſt her deluded parents neglected the cultivation of her mind, which was neceſſary to qualify her for that elevation in life to which they taught her to aſpire, truſting to her beauty for ſupplying every defect; and this they ſaw through the microſcopic medium of parental fondneſs, and therefore thought it much greater than it was in reality; though with the expence of dreſs that was beſtowed on her, and her own perſonal charms, ſhe promiſed to become a pretty figure. At the age of fourteen,

her mother ſo far reſiſted her own fondneſs, as to ſend her daughter to a boarding-ſchool, where, like the reſt of her companions, ſhe was permitted to employ the greateſt part of her time in reading romances, of that claſs which indeed entertain, but at the ſame time corrupt the mind they ſhould improve, and inflame thoſe paſſions they ſhould repreſs. By theſe, and the converſation of her companions, ſhe became inſenſibly tainted; as they mutually inſtructed each other on ſubjects that raiſed paſſions and deſires repugnant to female chaſtity. After a lapſe of eighteen months, ſhe was removed from ſchool to the care of her fond mother: and ſoon after Mr. Manners, a young gentleman of fortune, ſaw her ſeveral times in publick, and from the levity of her behaviour, was encouraged to hope that he might be able to ſeduce her. For this purpoſe he declared himſelf her lover, and deſired her parents to permit him

him to viſit her as ſuch. Notwithſtanding the ſuperiority of his fortune, they were not ſurprized at this event. An important conqueſt was what they expected from her beauty, and they did not in the leaſt ſuſpect any diſhonourable deſign. Miſs Jackſon, however, was too much in love with herſelf, to conceive a paſſion for any individual; but yet ſhe was pleaſed with his viſit, not only from her idea of his being able to ſupport her in gaiety and affluence, but from her having loſt that delicacy which ſhould have better guarded her againſt one of his ſex.—Mr. Manners was gay, artful, and aſſuming; and as he had many opportunities of improving the advantages which her diſpoſition afforded, it is not ſurprizing that his endeavours were ſoon ſucceſsful. Satiety ſucceeded enjoyment on his ſide, and conſequently diſſatisfaction on hers, inſomuch that they ſoon became indifferent to each other.—At that time Mr.

Wentworth happened to come acquainted with her, and for him ſhe profeſſes to have conceived a violent paſſion. As few women tenaciouſly preſerve the ſemblance of virtue, when they have loſt their reality, it is by no means ſtrange that he was ſoon able to ſhare her favours.——She had beſides another motive to incontinency with him; for ſhe began to fear that her former intercourſe with Mr. Manners would be followed with viſible fruits; and as ſhe had no hopes of being able to engage him to marriage, ſhe was glad of a pretence for charging her pregnancy to an intercourſe with Mr. Wentworth, in hopes that he might be induced to repair the ſuppoſed injury by marriage; as the deſparity between them was not ſo conſiderable as between her and Mr. Manners. You know the imputations which ſhe afterwards faſtened on Mr. Wentworth's conduct, which were the conſequence of this her previous deſign,

ſign, to prevail with him to receive her in marriage, and were without any truth; as ſhe now attributes her pregnancy to her commerce with Mr. Manners, and confeſſes that Mr. Wentworth never ſeduced her by any promiſe of marriage.—After Mr. Wentworth's unexpected departure, the parents of Miſs Jackſon finding no probability of hiding their daughter's diſgrace with the veil of matrimony, aſſumed the reſolution of treating her with the moſt rigid ſeverity, as a chaſtiſement for that miſconduct which derived its origin from their own imprudence.—Accuſtomed to all that exceſs of indulgence, which the fondeſt parents could beſtow, the unhappy daughter thought this reverſe of treatment intolerable; and rather than ſupport it, reſolved to throw herſelf upon her firſt ſeducer, and there ſeek a wretched aſylum, from the untimely ſeverity of her parents; who, by this miſtaken conduct, engaged her to perſevere in a courſe

of vice, from which by prudence ſhe might have been reclaimed. With him ſhe led a guilty life, 'till her pregnancy was ſo far advanced, that he judged her unfit any longer to adminiſter to his pleaſures, and then abandoned her, after leaving her the paltry ſum of ten guineas, as a full compenſation for her loſs of chaſtity, reputation, parents, and happineſs.——With this ſhe retired to an obſcure, cheap lodging, there to wait the moment of her delivery; in that ſituation ſhe continued, till ſhe lay in of a child, which died ſoon after its birth. Miſs Jackſon being thus eaſed of that incumbrance, and abandoned by her firſt ſeducer, was inclined to throw herſelf on the mercy of her parents for pardon and protection. But pride and ſhame, the ſtrongeſt paſſions of the mind, for ſome time combated this diſpoſition; at length, however, ſhe was determined to this meaſure, by the horrors of her preſent and future proſpects in life; and

wrote

wrote to her parents (with the ſtrongeſt profeſſions of repentance, and promiſes of a blameleſs life and behaviour hereafter) to implore their forgiveneſs and protection: but this they denied, with expreſſions which entirely excluded every hope of a reconciliation: by this obſtinate adherence to a miſtaken principle, their wretched daughter found herſelf cut off from the virtuous part of ſociety, diſowned by all her acquaintance, and abandoned to the mercy of an inhoſpitable world, without any means of ſupport, but what ſhe might procure, either by laborious ſervitude, or by publick proſtitution.—The idleneſs in which ſhe had been educated, rendered her averſe from labour, and the calls of hunger, with the too commodious and alluring opportunities, engaged her to prefer a courſe of vice, to her the only and wretched alternative to ſervitude; and confirmed her a ſlave to libertines, and to the more than ſavage tyranny

of thoſe execrable monſters of our ſex, from the idea of whoſe office modeſty ſhrinks affrighted. At firſt, however, ſhe acted in a ſphere elevated above the moſt abject ſtate of proſtitution; but that prodigality, which is common to all theſe unhappy women, and the impoſitions they ſuffer, from all with whom they have any dealings, prevented her from making any reſerve for futurity out of her guilty hire; thence a ſtate of indigence, aggravated by horrors, with an idea of which I would neither ſtain paper nor my conception. In a little time after this was become her caſe, ſhe pawned all her cloaths and apparel, and found it neceſſary to ſeek relief in an hoſpital. Thence, after a certain time, ſhe was diſcharged, almoſt naked; and being no longer able to appear genteel, or even decent, was compelled to herd with the loweſt order of thoſe wretches, who for a miſerable ſubſiſtence, nightly infeſt the ſtreets;

objects

objects at once of pity and disdain.—To repeat the various scenes of misery which Miss Jackson suffered in this state, and which she mentions in her letter, would perhaps be ungrateful, to a mind so chaste and virtuous as yours; I could wish, however, that they were known to all those who are in danger of imitating her in that vice, which is the natural parent of miseries like hers; being fully persuaded that the knowledge of them would freeze every incontinent desire. I shall, however, only observe, that her misery disposed her to an excessive use of intoxicating liquors, to destroy reflection, and forget her former self and friends. The effect of this, combining with the other horrors of her course of life, in a little time her person, once so fair, became loathsome and offensive, foul corruption making every limb its prey. And whilst her body suffered these dreadful changes, her mind was not less corrupted: modesty, which adds

the

the higheſt luſtre to female charms, had long totally left her; and now oaths and curſes were ſubſtituted to that amiable chaſtity and delicacy, which ſhould characterize female converſation: and that ſoul which might have been the temple of every virtue, became a receptacle of every vice. The miſeries of her ſituation, however, at length brought her to reflection, and ſhe reſolved to renounce a career, the preſent pains of which were but a foretaſte of the future. She therefore applied for, and obtained admittance into the *Magdalen*, that aſylum for the wretched victims of publick incontinence, who there exchange the miſeries of proſtitution, for a life of obſcurity in ſhades and tranquility.——There ſhe now is, and declares, that ſhe cannot expect forgiveneſs of heaven for her crimes, till by this confeſſion ſhe has made all the reparation in her power to the character of Mr. Wentworth, which has been injured

jured by her unjuſt aſperſions; and ſolemnly avers the truth of this letter. But to prevent all deception, I have ſent a meſſenger to ſee whether ſhe is really there, and has wrote the letter; of this I am now fully ſatisfied. And after being thus convinced of Mr. Wentworth's innocence, you will not be ſurprized if I tell you that I have juſt been reading over the extract you ſent me a few days ago, from his laſt letter to his brother—and that with pleaſure. If he is really that conſtant, ardent lover, which he deſcribes himſelf, and if upon his return he ſhould renew his addreſſes, I believe he would find no great cauſe to complain of my ſeverity; eſpecially as the happineſs which I ſee, by your example, the marriage-ſtate is capable of, will be no ſmall encouragement to my hazarding the experiment. But, all this is between ourſelves. You may be a good wife, without betraying the ſecrets of your friend, even to your huſband.

band.——Over theſe, my dear Louiſa, not even connubial confidence has any right; and I am particularly deſirous to ſee how Mr. Wentworth will conduct himſelf upon his arrival, without his knowing any thing of my real ſentiments.

Adieu, my dear Louiſa.—I ſhall ſee you to-morrow, and ever endeavour to approve myſelf

Your moſt faithful

and affectionate friend,

Wedneſday afternoon.

SOPHIA STANHOPE.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

The Rev. Mr. WENTWORTH to Mrs. WENTWORTH.

IT is with the deepeſt affliction, my dear parent, that I find myſelf under the neceſſity of acquainting you with a very melancholy event.—But ſtop.—How ſhall I reveal this unhappy cataſtrophe, which will require all your fortitude to bear its weight?—I feel the affliction it will occaſion in your mind; but hope that your pious reſignation to the will of heaven, which before withſtood its ſevereſt diſpenſation, will now aſſiſt you to ſupport the loſs of a—*ſon*.—That ſon, whoſe return you are now waiting to welcome, with all the effuſions of maternal affection, is alas! no more.——Here let me pauſe—and join my

my tears with yours, for the death of a beloved, unfortunate brother.——The firſt tranſports of grief, being in ſome degree ſubſided, you will, perhaps, deſire to know the circumſtances of this afflicting event. To gratify your curioſity, therefore, I will add, that the ſhip in which your ſon was a paſſenger, was unhappily wrecked among the rocks of Scilly, in the darkneſs of the night, and all but the maſter and one ſeaman were drowned. Our loſs was, however, previous to this accident; the maſter of the ſhip, who is now in town, informs me that two days before, as they approached the coaſt of England, my brother, in the natural enough reſtleſſneſs of impatience for the welcome ſight of his native land, was up even before dawn of day; and, as by way of amuſement, he was at the cabbin-window, dipping up a bucket of ſea-water, in order to make ſome philoſophical obſervations, he unfortunately over-reached himſelf,

and

and fell overboard.——That his people on deck had immediately thrown over to him a hencoop, and ſoon after a ſmall boat, and that as ſoon after as poſſible, (though it was not in leſs than ten minutes, as one watch was aſleep) they had put the ſhip about in queſt of him; but the darkneſs of the time, and the diſtance they had ſailed in that interval, rendered it impoſſible to find him; and they were obliged to abandon him to the mercy of that element, in which he will doubtleſs remain, till *the ſea ſhall give up its dead.* I ſhall forbear expreſſions of my own grief, leaſt they ſhould aggravate yours; nor will I detain you with any untimely endeavours for your conſolation, which but too often feed the ſorrow they aim at alleviating. Your own reaſon and dependance on the wiſdom and goodneſs of heaven, which have hitherto aſſiſted you through the many viciſſitudes of your life, will, doubtleſs, enable you to elude the ſeverity

verity of this afflicting event; and to theſe I muſt leave you till my return to-morrow, after obſerving for your conſolation, that the divine wiſdom which governs every diſpenſation of providence, has undoubtedly directed this event for important purpoſes, though beyond the reach of human penetration: deſerving as he has hitherto appeared, he might have fallen, (forgive, departed brother, this unfavourable idea) a prey to vices that would have conſigned his memory to cenſure, and himſelf to preſent and future miſery; and that thoſe tears which will now flow from affection, might have been ſhed for his errors.—But that is now impoſſible.—Death has finiſhed his actions, and decided his character; and we may juſtly hope that his ſoul has winged its flight to manſions of perfect and eternal felicity, where virtue, like yours, will be rewarded, and where, in a proceſs of time, you will again meet him to part no more. —— Suffer me, however,

however, dear parent, to hope that the perfect conſummation of your happineſs, may be delayed until this mortal machine is no longer animated by the mind of

Your moſt dutiful

and affectionate,

London, June 15, 1766,

but afflicted ſon,

EDWARD WENTWORTH.

LETTER

LETTER X.

To Mrs. WENTWORTH.

YESTERDAY morning, dear Louiſa, your letter—of all the letters I ever received, the moſt unwelcome—was delivered to me. —— Since then I have twice endeavoured to write to you, but in vain.—My ſenſes have been too much affected, too oppreſſed with grief, to attend any thing but that melancholy event by which they are depreſſed. —— And is he really dead?—irrecoverably loſt?—Then tranquility and I muſt hereafter be ſtrangers.—— You, dear Louiſa, who know the ardour with which my ſtifled paſſion for Mr. Wentworth has revived, ſince I have diſcovered his innocence, and thoſe extravagant expectations of happineſs

from him which I have lately indulged, can form ſome idea of the extent of my diſappointment. Its impreſſions are indeed too deep to be ever obliterated, either by the hand of reaſon or of time.—My ſun of happineſs is now ſet—never more to riſe.—Nor is there any thing in life that can now animate my hopes, engage my wiſhes, or purſuits.—To whatever object I turn my diſconſolate mind, all is dreary and joyleſs, ſince he for whom, and with whom alone I could wiſh to live,—lives no more.—There is a mighty void in my ſoul, that no object on earth can fill—But too much affected to write—I can only add, that I am,

Dear Louiſa,

Your moſt affectionate

and afflicted friend,

SOPHIA STANHOPE.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

To Miſs STANHOPE.

DEAR SOPHIA,

I HAVE juſt peruſed your letter to Mrs. Wentworth; and my thanks are due to you, for the ſhare you take in our common affliction, for a late melancholy event. Permit me, however, to obſerve, that there is nothing which may not be too much deplored.—Friendſhip and affection have their limits, and the ſorrow which ariſes from the loſs of their objects, ſhould be limited alſo.—I am not inſenſible of my own inability, to practiſe what I know to be right on this trying occaſion.—I feel it at this moment in poignant ſenſations of grief, which nothing but the ſuggeſtions of piety,

piety, and my intire dependence on the wiſdom and goodneſs of that power from whom we derive the bleſſings of exiſtence and preſervation, could enable me to ſuſtain: indulge the ſame ſentiments with their due influence on your mind, and I hope they will impart the ſame conſolation that I have received from them.—Permit me to deſire the favour of your ſociety in our afflicted family, which may divert, if not alleviate our mutual grief; and as untimely condolance is but the remembrancer of ſorrow, I will at preſent only aſſure you, that though this accident deprives me of the felicity of a nearer relation, I ſhall always endeavour to cultivate that friendſhip with which I have the happineſs to be,

Dear Sophia,

Your moſt affectionate
and devoted ſervant,

EDWARD WENTWORTH.

LETTER XII.

To Mr. CONWAY.

DEAR BROTHER,

A FEW weeks ago I made you acquainted with the afflicted ſituation of our family; and I am now to inform you of the ſequel to that event, which was the ſubject of my laſt.—Yeſterday as all the family were employed in deploring Mr. Charles Wentworth's death, and mutually feeding each others affliction, a letter was brought to Mr. Wentworth, and he immediately perceived the ſuperſcription to be the hand of his brother. Surprized at this circumſtance, he eagerly opened it, and found it ſigned with his name.—Of this he informed us; adding, that he ſuppoſed it muſt have been wrote from Demerary,

Demerary, and by ſome accident delayed 'till then: but on looking at it again, he found it dated from Philadelphia, and ſome weeks later than the time of his ſuppoſed death. Aſtoniſhed at a circumſtance ſo ſtrange, he impatiently read as follows. "Before this time I am, doubtleſs, numbered with the dead, by the beſt of parents and brothers: heaven, however, has in mercy delivered me from a ſituation in which I thought death inevitable."——Here he ſtopped; confuſed with joy; whilſt the letter dropped from his hand. Mrs. Wentworth and Sophia (who was then with us) at the ſame time fainted, for the firſt time of their lives: ſo violent are the affections of ſudden joy!—In a little time, however, they were recovered from this ſuſpenſion of their intellectual functions; and when the firſt tranſports of their joy had a little ſubſided, they deſired to be more particularly acquainted with the circumſtan-

ces of this happy reverſe of fortune, which they could hardly believe to be true. — Mr. Wentworth then reſumed, and finiſhed the reading of his letter, (a copy of which I herewith incloſe.)— This being done, and our curioſity gratified, every one appeared in a delirium of happineſs.—This was the moſt affecting change I had ever ſeen; and the moſt ſudden tranſition from the deepeſt affliction, to the higheſt joy.— In about three hours after, we ſaw Mr. Charles Wentworth alight at the door. His brother flew with tranſport to meet him: Mrs. Wentworth ſhed tears of joy, and Sophia again fainted.—Quitting the embraces of his brother, he ran to thoſe of his mother; and when the ardour of theſe became a little relaxed, he caſt his eyes on Sophia, whoſe head was reclined on the breaſt of her maid (ſhe not being yet recovered.) Heavens! exclaimed he, what do I ſee? Is it Sophia? and inſtantly flew to the couch

on

on which ſhe was ſeated, placing himſelf by her, and claſping her in his arms, In doing this, he ſeemed to have yielded to the impulſe of his paſſion, without the leaſt reflection. In a few ſeconds, Sophia began to recover: life returned to her eyes—and bluſhes to her cheeks, when ſhe found herſelf in the arms of a man.—But her ſurprize abated, on diſcovering who he was; and yielding to the languor and debility, which the violence of her late emotions had occaſioned, ſhe again reclined herſelf in his arms, in confidence and peace.——All this time he was ignorant of the confeſſion Miſs Jackſon had made, and of the change it had produced in his favour, though he ſtill held the dear object of all his wiſhes in his arms.—He claſped her hand, and raiſed it to his lips—but on a ſudden, reflecting that he might ſtill be under her diſpleaſure, he reſtrained the ardour of his tranſport; till he found

her ſufficiently recovered to ſpeak, and then addreſſing himſelf to her, "may I," ſaid he, dear Sophia, "interpret your late diſorder as a favourable preſage of my future happineſs.? or on the contrary, do you ſtill continue inexorable, and inſenſible to every thing but my former indiſcretion?" "Your heart is ſilent," (added he, finding ſhe made no reply;) "and you feel no emotions at the ſight of one, whoſe ſoul is filled with you."—Heavens!" continued he, "how am I diſtracted to ſee, to embrace and adore you, and yet to reflect on the danger of loſing you?"—I perceived that Sophia was too much confuſed, too much agitated, to make any reply; and therefore to relieve him from a ſtate of painful ſuſpenſe, explained the contents of Miſs Jackſon's letter, and the favourable change of ſentiments it had produced in Sophia.—It will be eaſier to conceive,

than

than deſcribe his tranſports on this occaſion. Sophia raiſed her head, and viewed him with enlivened eyes—Eyes animated with delight. He alternately expreſſed his gratitude for her goodneſs—and that of Heaven.—And again claſped her in his arms, whilſt ſhe permitted the ſoft, the tender violence.—Superlative joy! when honeſt hearts, united by love, can meet each other without reſerve, and without a doubt of each others integrity.—Mrs. Wentworth was greatly affected, and ſhed tears at the tender ſcene; giving them her bleſſing, and wiſhing ſoon to ſee them indiſſolubly united.—Mr. Wentworth and myſelf, had our ſhare in their happineſs.—Sweet ſenſibility! Source of all that is pleaſing in our joys, or painful in our ſorrows; how acute are thy ſenſations? 'Tis from theſe that I derive the generous concerns, the diſintereſted

cares that extend beyond myſelf, and enable me to participate the emotions of ſorrows and joys that are not my own. — When Sophia's agitations were ſufficiently ſubſided, ſhe expreſſed the kind returns of love, with the moſt obliging candour, but amiable delicacy and pathetic gracefulneſs; and the remainder of the day, we mutually indulged the ſuggeſtions of joy and affection. And this morning Mr. Wentworth, with Sophia's conſent, waited on on Mrs. Stanhope, to aſk her daughter in marriage, and next Tueſday ſe'nnight is juſt now fixed for the wedding.—I had ſeen Mr. Wentworth ſeveral times before his departure from England, and find him not a little improved during his abſence. — He is returned pleaſing in perſon, hardened by travel, inſtructed by experience, and poliſhed by adverſity.—I have time only to deſire that

you

you will make my affectionate compliments to Mrs. Conway, and believe me ever to be,

Dear brother,

Your moſt grateful

and affectionate ſiſter,

London, Sept. 20, 1766.

LOUISA WENTWORTH.

To the Rev. Mr. WENTWORTH.

Incloſed in the preceding.

I AM, doubtleſs, before this, numbered with the dead, by the beſt of parents and brothers: Heaven has, however, in mercy delivered me from a ſituation in which death appeared inevitable;

and I am yet permitted to hope for the happineſs of being one day reſtored to my dear mother, yourſelf, and our friends.—I will not ſuſpend the gratification of your curioſity, by an unneceſſary *preface*.—You are, doubtleſs, acquainted with the manner in which I fell into the ſea, near the coaſt of England. A hencoop was ſoon caſt into the water, at a little diſtance from me, and by ſwimming I caught hold of it, without difficulty.—By this I was ſuſpended—and in that ſituation I ſaw the ſhip at a conſiderable diſtance come about, as I ſuppoſed, for my recovery; the courſe, however, in which it ſteered, was not directly towards me, and I found it impoſſible to make them hear my voice; and to ſee me was for them impoſſible, from the darkneſs of the night.—In a little time after I ſaw the ſhip, to which all my hopes were directed, turn from, and purſue her courſe.—I had been till

then

then too much agitated between hope and fear, for reflection; and deſpair of eſcaping the death with which I was imminated, from every ſide ſucceeded to theſe.—I viewed my ſituation with a confuſion of paſſions, and an awful nameleſs horror that words cannot expreſs.—In this ſtate—which can be eaſier conceived than deſcribed—I paſſed two hours; wet, and almoſt chilled with cold and deſpair.—It then became ſo light, that I could ſee at a conſiderable diſtance, and I plainly perceived a little way off a boat, which I ſuppoſed to have been caſt into the water for me.—I immediately reſolved to hazard an attempt, to gain it by ſwimming.—In this I ſucceeded; but conſidered my acquiſition only as the means of adding a few hours to the wretched term of my exiſtence.——It enabled me, however, to get myſelf out of the water, which in a little time would have chilled every vital function.—The

ſun aroſe; and it being ſummer, I ſtript off my wet ſhirt, (the laſt of my cloaths that remained) and felt myſelf revived by its friendly warmth.—The ſea was ſmooth, and if it continued ſo, I perceived I might live till hunger or thirſt became inſupportable. This, however, was but a very precarious circumſtance; as the leaſt increaſe of wind, would produce an agitation of the ſea, too great for my little veſſel. I therefore concluded my death inevitable, either from hunger or the waves. But without murmuring at a fate ſo dreadful, I yielded patiently to the ſovereign will, preparing myſelf for the allotments of eternity, and an awful tranſition to an untried ſtate.—Of all my errors, none gave me ſo much uneaſineſs as the miſery I had occaſioned to Miſs Jackſon. And I even lamented that I had not repaired the effects of my indiſcretion by marriage, at the expence of my own happineſs.—

In

In about two hours I diſcovered a ſhip ſailing at a great diſtance, but was unable to aſcertain her courſe. In a little time I perceived ſhe was coming nearer to me, but could not diſcover her courſe with any exactneſs; and yet I began to entertain a hope that ſhe might prove the means of my ſalvation: this hope became ſtronger and ſtronger, as the ſhip approached nearer and nearer: and in about an hour I began to flatter myſelf with the certainty of my eſcape from that dangerous ſituation.—As my hopes became ſtrong, I began to fear they would prove fallacious; and between theſe oppoſite ſenſations I was violently agitated, 'till another hour had almoſt elapſed.—The ſhip then appeared at the diſtance of about a mile, and ſteering directly towards me: but leaſt an imperceptible variation of courſe might carry her by me, at too great a diſtance to be diſcovered, I began to think of making ſome ſignal, for greater certainty;

certainty; and for that purpoſe I tore off a narrow piece of board, about eight feet in length, which had been nailed on the ſide of my boat, and tying my ſhirt to one end of it, waved it in the air.—In a little time I perceived it was obſerved. — Conceive, if poſſible, the joy I then felt, at that inſtant. — The ſhip continued her courſe directly towards me, till at the diſtance of thirty yards; when ſuddenly turning her ſails againſt the wind, her motion retarded.—I then immediately threw myſelf into the water, and ſwam to the ſide of the veſſel, where I received a rope that was thrown to me, and with that raiſed myſelf to the main chains, and by them entered the ſhip, which was bound from London to Philadelphia. The maſter was a quaker, and after acquainting him with my hiſtory, and the manner I had been reduced to the ſituation from which he had delivered me, he lent me ſome cloaths, and treated me with kindneſs during

during the paſſage, which proved but ſhort.—On my arrival here, I found a man who had been maſter of a veſſel trading to Demerary, and whom I had ſome time before aſſiſted on ſeveral occaſions; and upon diſcovering that I was deſtitute not only of money, but even of cloaths, (except thoſe I had borrowed) he generouſly offered to lend me as much as I wanted. I profited by this obliging offer, and accepted one hundred pounds, for which I have drawn on you. — With this I have gratified the maſter, by whom I was ſaved from the mercy of the waves (though he would accept only the ordinary price of a paſſage) and have alſo cloathed myſelf.— I expect the laſt of this week to embark in a ſhip for London; and now diſpatch this by the packet from New York to Falmouth, which will ſail about the ſame time.—I have been about ten days in this city; which is the capital of the largeſt colony in Britiſh America, and built

built on a plan the moſt regular and advantageous, that any city on earth can boaſt: a plan formed and partly executed by the celebrated Penn, who was proprietor of the whole colony, and an excellent legiſlator, founding its laws on moderation and juſtice, and making the utmoſt extent of civil and religious liberty the baſis of his eſtabliſhment, and yet he died in the Fleet priſon; after expending his fortune to people the earth, and promote the happineſs of mankind; preferring the intereſt of future and remote poſterity, to his own eaſe and emolument. — In this colony, equality yet holds her balance; all are here above want, though none above the exerciſe of thoſe faculties which nature has beſtowed for action; and the wants of life are ſupplied by induſtry alone, whilſt every one has his alloted employment; no drone being fed, nor the gilded creſt of vice ſeen above the reach of juſtice. This

is

is that point of mediocrity, which is the happieſt ſtate of political ſociety.—When I reflect on the preſent extent and condition of the Britiſh colonies on this continent, the extent and fertility of their ſoil, and the diverſity of their climates, and the rapid and natural increaſe of their inhabitants, improved by conſtant migrations from Europe, I am convinced that their numbers will in a few ages, exceed thoſe of any other ſtate; and conſequently I foreſee in theſe colonies the *embryo* of a mighty empire, which in ſome future century, by reducing thoſe of other European ſtates to its obedience, may give laws to European nations, till like them enervated by luxury and vice, it ſhall totter to its fall. But I muſt prepare again to croſs that dangerous element from which I have ſo lately eſcaped; and can therefore only deſire you to aſſure my dear mother of my conſtant duty and affection, to offer my reſpectful compliments to Mr. Went-

worth;

worth; and do me the juſtice to believe, that nothing will ever impair the affection with which I have the happineſs to be,

Dear brother,

Yours, &c.

Philadelphia,
Aug. 1, 1766.

CHARLES WENTWORTH.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

To Henry Conway, Esq.

DEAR BROTHER

WE have all ſuffered a very unwelcome diſappointment from the obſtacle that deprived us of the pleaſure of your company yeſterday, when Mr. Charles Wentworth, and the amiable Sophia, were ſolemnly and inſeperably united. Mrs. Wentworth, my mother, Mrs. Stanhope, Mrs. Clinton, Mr. Wentworth, and ſeveral other friends attended them to church, where the ceremony was performed.——Sophia appeared, if poſſible, more amiable than I had ever ſeen her before: her eyes were animated with ſenſibility and joy; and modeſty, with irreſiſtible faſcination,

appeared

appeared in every feature; whilſt all the charms of her perſon were improved by the elegant propriety and neatneſs of her dreſs. Though led to the altar by the hand of love, ſhe was affected by the ſolemnity of the ceremony; ſo happily contrived to expreſs the purity, dignity, and ſanctity of marriage, and its chaſte and important duties, ſo agreeable in themſelves, and ſo neceſſary to the order and happineſs of ſociety.

——————nor uninformed
Of nuptial ſanctity and marriage rites:
Grace was in all her ſteps, heaven in her eye,
In every geſture dignity and love! MILTON.

Mr. Wentworth's appearance was pleaſing and manly: ſenſible of the greatneſs of the bleſſing he was going to receive, he was impatient for the ceremony that would confirm it to him for ever. The croſſes and viciſſitudes he had

had before ſuffered, made him fear a diſappointment in his happineſs even at the hour of conſummation; and his impatience and ſolicitude were apparent in his countenance and behaviour, till they were pronounced "man and wife."

"Thus the chaſte bridegroom, when the prieſt
draws nigh,
Beholds his bleſſing with a trembling eye;
Feels doubtful paſſions throb in every vein,
And in his cheeks are mingled joy and pain:
Leſt ſtill ſome intervening chance ſhould riſe,
Leap forth at once, and ſnatch the golden prize:
Inflame his woe by bringing it ſo late,
And ſtab him in the criſis of his fate." YOUNG.

The ceremony being over, we returned home, and paſſed the day and evening in a very lively and agreeable manner.—About twelve at night, Sophia retired to her apartment, and in a little time Mr. Wentworth followed. I need add

no

no more than this, that I doubt not but heaven will beſtow on them all thoſe bleſſings their innocence and virtue deſerve.—I have indeed changed the paſſionate lover, for the affectionate huſband; but this is a change both natural and uſeful; love is attended with a conſtant inquietude, from jealouſy or fear of ſeparation, which is by no means compatible with that peace and tranquility which ought to ſubſiſt in the married ſtate, the regular government of ourſelves, or the diſcrete education of children. Lovers however attend to nothing but each other, and are inceſſantly employed in ſhewing their mutual paſſion, regardleſs of thoſe important objects which nature deſigned for our attention. Happily, however, the intemperance of paſſion is but of ſhort duration. Nature, wiſer than ourſelves, has ordained that a return of reaſon ſhould ſucceed poſſeſſion, and the intemperance of love give place to an affectionate

affectionate attachment, which if not ſo violent, is not leſs ſatisfactory, and certainly more permanent. Thus our paſſions, which before marriage were too ardently tender to be unmixed with anxiety, are now gently ſoothed to a delightful repoſe; diffidence and flutter of mind, are exchanged for the calmer delights of endearing friendſhip; our peace is uninterrupted by wayward humours; the tender cord of complacency and ſweet contentment, is unſhaken by the emotions of uneaſineſs or diſagreement; and our pleaſures and pains are mutually enjoyed and ſuffered; the tranſport of the former being doubled, and the burthen of the latter alleviated by the tender participation. What are the pomp of equipage, the parade of dreſs, the table of dainties, the tumult of *routs*, or the tireſome avocations of gay life, compared to the joy of loving and being beloved; to the tenderneſs of endearment; the careſſes of affection; and the con-

fidence of love?——Sweetly flows the blood unagitated by violent paſſions, and chearful are the ſpirits unharraſſed by remorſe.——This afternoon we paſſed with the new married pair.—The two brothers in the courſe of it, with the approbation of Sophia and myſelf, regulated the plan of our future lives.—Mr. Wentworth is to-morrow to be inducted into the living to which the biſhop of ——— has lately preſented him, ſituated about ten miles from town. There he propoſes conſtantly to reſide; and not to content himſelf with barely performing the unavoidable duties of his function, like a poor mechanic for a paltry hire. He judges that to eſcape cenſure only, is not ſufficient; and that the care of ſouls is a precious, a tremendous charge, that will demand his utmoſt pains and attention.—Mr. Charles Wentworth, though poſſeſſed of a ſufficient fortune, had ſome thoughts of following the buſineſs of his

his profeſſion, and carry his benevolence into action, by giving the profits of his practiſe to relieve the diſtreſſes of penury and diſeaſe. But to this his brother obected; that the whole buſineſs of ſurgery was hardly ſufficient to ſupport its numerous profeſſors in England, and by undertaking it, with deſign to ſerve the poor, he might injure many deſerving perſons, needing that practice for their ſupport, which he might divert from them.—This conſideration has made him reſolve to lay out his fortune in lands, and apply his attention to agriculture, which he conſiders as the moſt uſeful employment of life, and the moſt deſerving of encouragement; and all the profits that he can gain by farming his own eſtate, he reſolves to apply to relieve the honeſt induſtrious poor.——During our converſation this afternoon, the ſubject of a particular providence governing the actions of mankind, was by a natural tranſition introduced. Mr.

Wentworth declared for the belief of this doctrine, as inculcated by chriſtianity and moral philoſophy, as neceſſary to the enjoyment of life, and as the foundation of all the modes of religious worſhip that had ever been introduced, not only by chriſtians, but among all the reſt of mankind. And that he was fully perſuaded that the harmony and order of the natural world, are not more evidently the effects of a governing providence, than the chain of human actions, and the events that reſult from them, and which, however incomprehenſible to our finite underſtandings, all tend to a wiſe and happy purpoſe. "Do you," ſays he, addreſſing himſelf to his brother, "reflect on the moſt remarkable incidents of your own life, and you will find that all thoſe events which you once thought misfortunes, have been neceſſary to the happineſs of your preſent ſituation: when Miſs Jackſon's imputations on your character,

induced Miſs Stanhope to reject your addreſſes, and you to leave your country and friends, you conſidered it as the greateſt of misfortunes. When your partnerſhip with Mr. G—— in Barbadoes was diſſolved, you formed the ſame unfavourable concluſion. The ſame was your early opinion of the inſurrection of the ſlaves in Berbice, and of that accident by which you fell into the ſea. Yet all theſe have been inſtrumental to your happineſs. — Without the firſt, you would have had no chance of acquiring that fortune with which you are now returned; without the ſecond, your progreſs in the acquiſition of wealth, would have been but ſlow; without the third, you would have had no opportunity of purchaſing a plantation for a very inconſiderable ſum; and without the laſt, you would have been wrecked on the rocks of Scilly, and probably drowned with the greateſt part of your companions: and though from the nature

ture of things, it will ſometimes neceſſarily be impoſſible for us ever to diſcover the uſe of events, which appear unfavourable; we ought notwithſtanding to conſider them as neceſſary to ſome important purpoſe, which the narrow extent of human penetration cannot reach. Whoever is convinced of this, and of the goodneſs of that Being who is wiſer than ourſelves, and orders every event for a happy purpoſe, will find it an inexhauſtible ſource of conſolation, and will be able to elude the weight of every affliction; and to gain this conviction, is the ſureſt expedient to improve the happineſs of life."—I leave you to your own reflections on this ſubject, and am with the moſt perfect affection,

Dear brother,

Yours, &c.

Wedneſday evening.

LOUISA WENTWORTH.

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM

The END of the THIRD VOLUME.